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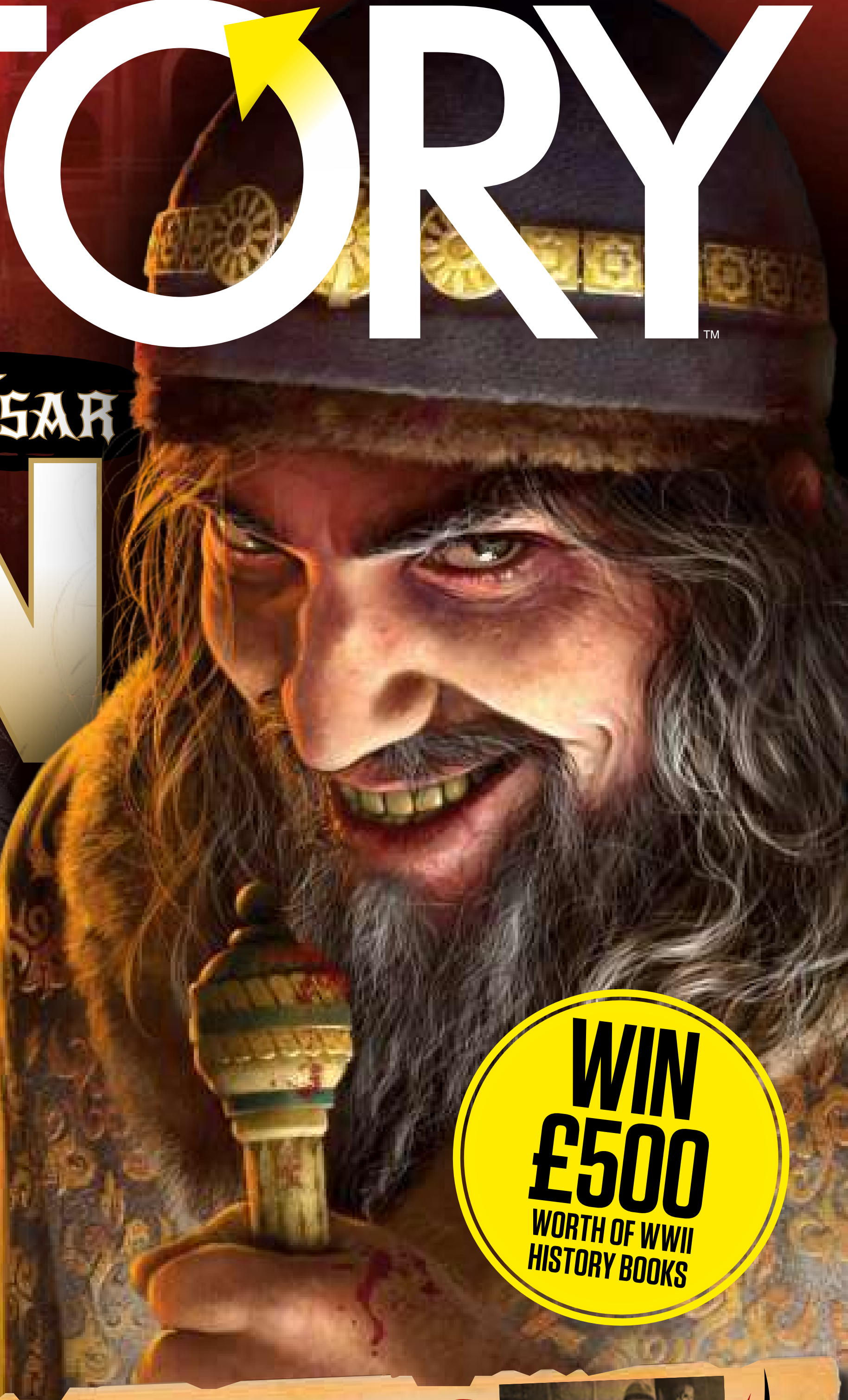

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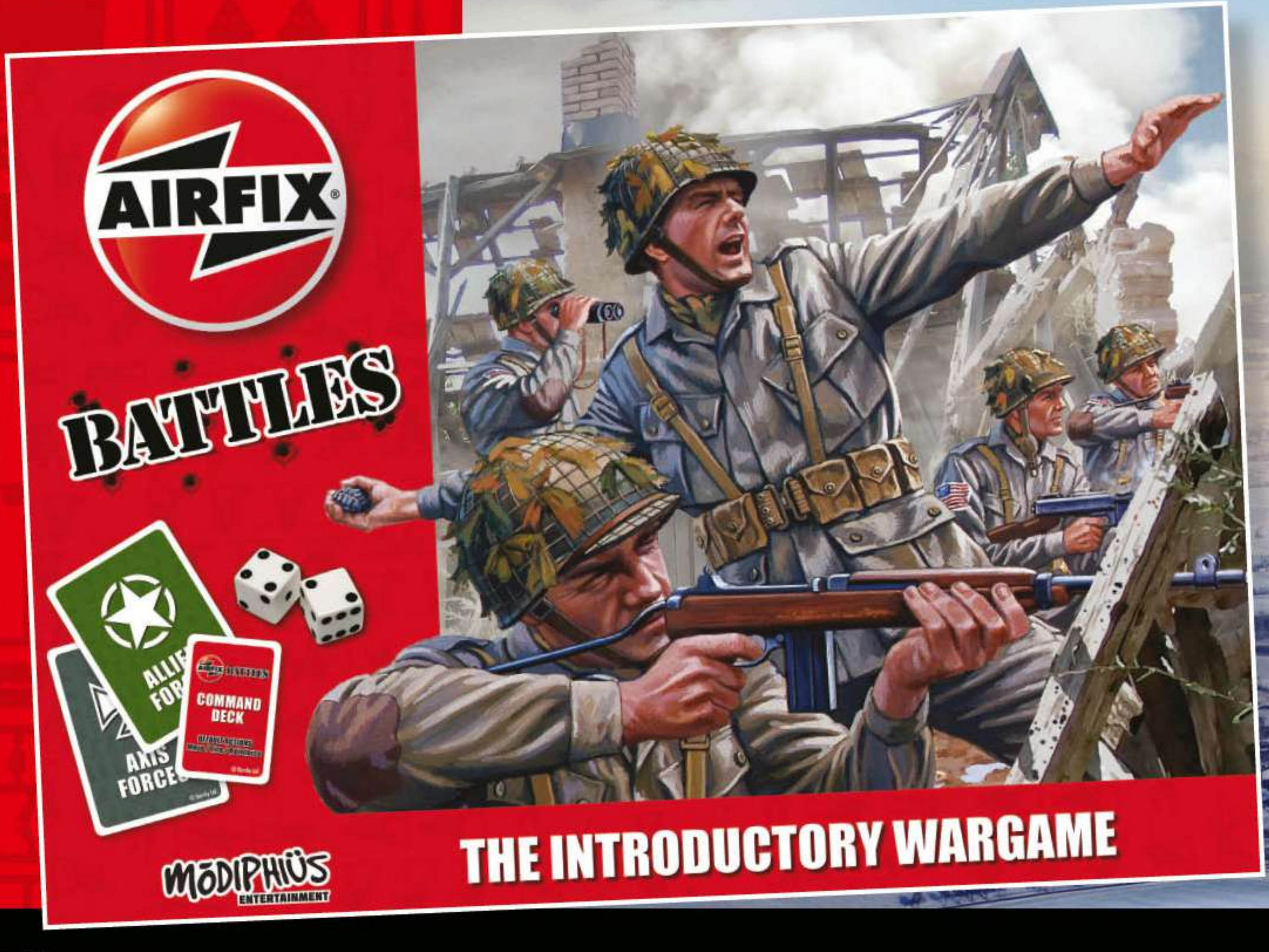
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Moscow's famous Saint Basil's Cathedral in Red Square was built on the orders of Ivan IV from 1555 to 1561 to mark the capture of Kazan

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Welcome

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As I write this message the **All About History** team is working from home, like much of the UK and people around the world. It's been a strange experience but thankfully, as in just about every field, we've pulled together.

With everything that's been going on in recent weeks, I wanted to start off by publicly thanking my team for their incredible efforts and commitment. And I wanted to thank you, reader, for picking us up. I appreciate your support and interest during this challenging time and I hope this issue will offer some much-needed diversion and entertainment.

To that end, you won't find much by way of pandemic history this issue. We've explored other topics, like the villainy of Ivan the Terrible, the debauchery of the Grand Guignol theatre in Paris, and the lessons we can learn from Viking tales of the Valkyrie about the role of women in Norse communities. While we've had to make some temporary changes to the magazine, we've kept our editorial approach the same.

On page ten you'll find our Reader Survey is running for one more month. There's still time to be entered into a draw to win £500-worth of history books. Please go to bit.ly/AAH2020 to take part. And be sure to go to bit.ly/AAH90gifts to download your free Ebooks and wallpapers this issue too. I hope you enjoy the issue. Take care.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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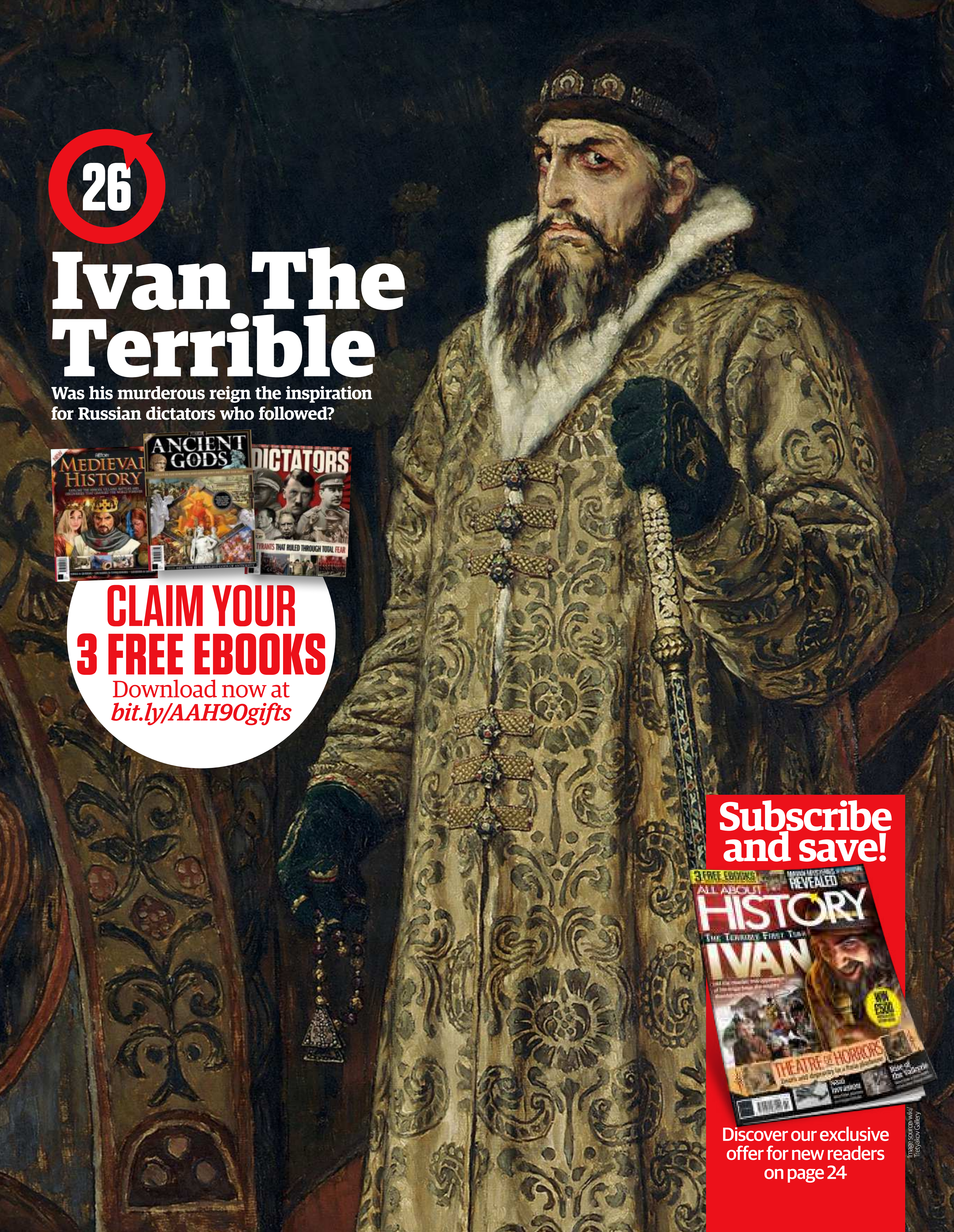

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Ivan The Terrible

Was his murderous reign the inspiration for Russian dictators who followed?

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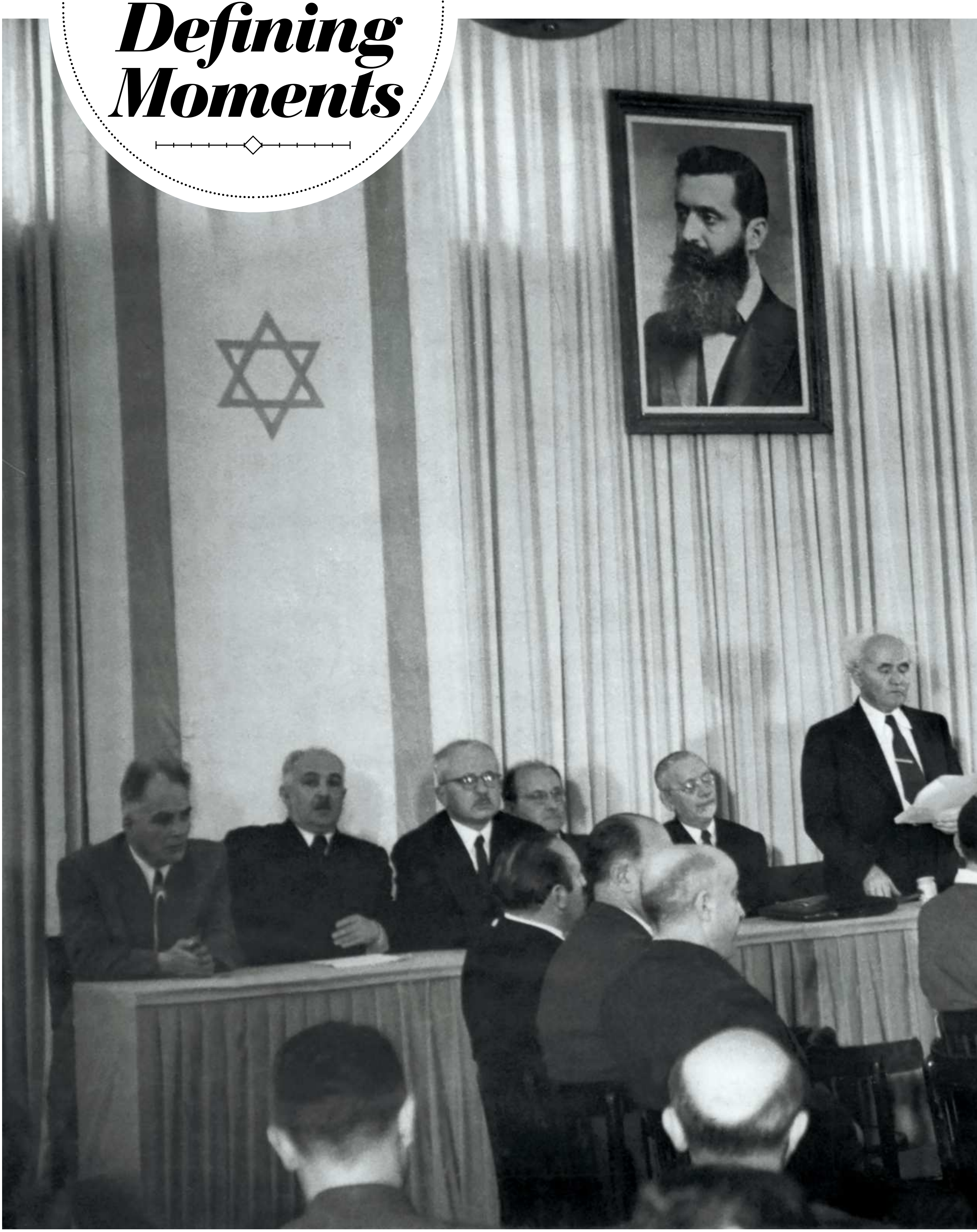
Defining Moments



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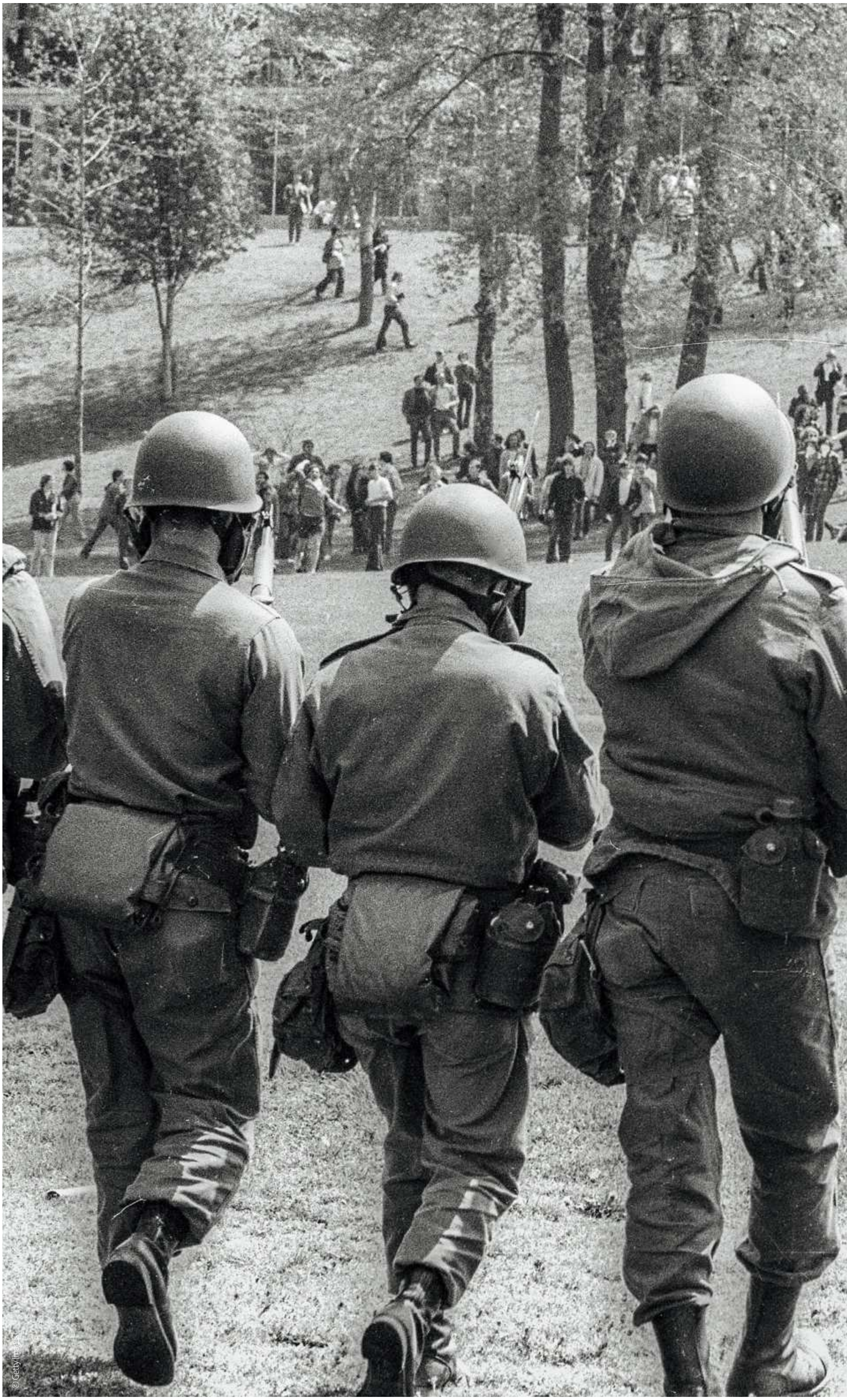
14 May 1948

ISRAEL DECLARES INDEPENDENCE

The establishment of the State of Israel was proclaimed by David Ben-Gurion, the chairman of the Jewish Agency and executive head of the Zionist Organisation, at a ceremony the Tel Aviv Museum. That same day, the British mandate for Palestine was withdrawn at midnight, a move that marked the formal beginning of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, which ended with an Israeli victory almost ten months later.



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4 May 1970

KENT STATE MASSACRE

Following President Nixon's announcement of the US invasion of Cambodia on 30 April, protests began at colleges and universities nationwide. At Kent State University, the Ohio National Guard opened fire on unarmed students, killing four and wounding nine others, after ordering them to disperse. The shootings sparked a national student strike involving four million students, with thousands of them protesting in Washington D.C. against the Vietnam War.

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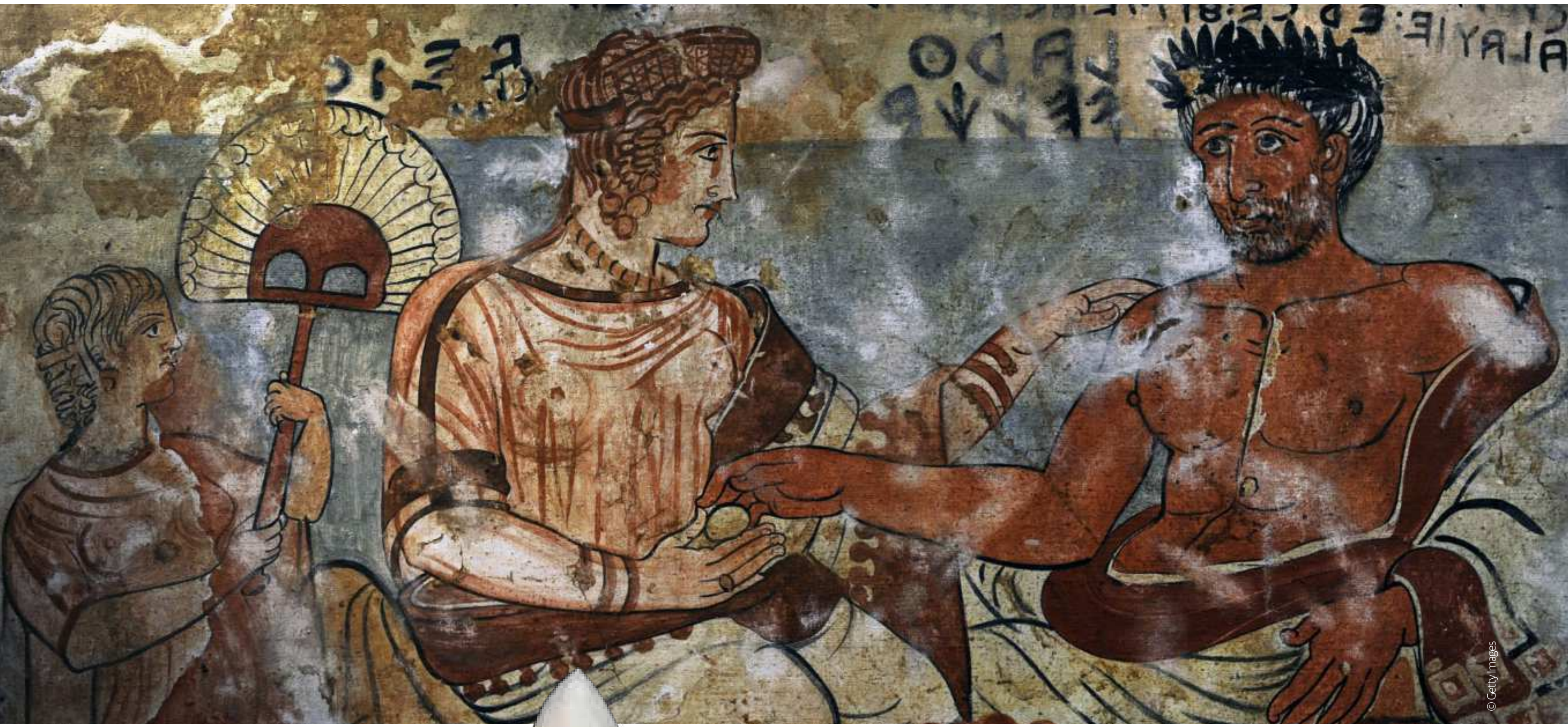
ALL ABOUT

THE ETRUSCANS

We explore northern Italy before the rise of the Romans to see what life was like for another ancient civilisation



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Written by Jessica Leggett, Callum McKelvie, Jonathan Gordon

Etruscan civilisation

4x © Getty Images

City of Vulci flourishes

700 BCE

Located near the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea, Vulci is an incredibly important Etruscan city, famous for the bronze sculptures made by many of its inhabitants. It would later rule over several other cities and become a centre of trade.

Did you know?

Originally the Etruscans were the co-founders of early Rome and at its height Vulci had some power over it

1200 BCE

C. 700 BCE

C. 530 BCE

PROTO-VILLANOVAN CULTURE 1200-900 BCE

A late Bronze Age civilisation existing just prior to the development of Villanovan culture, the oldest phase of Etruscan civilization.

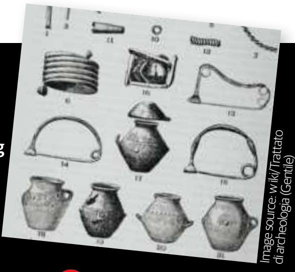


Image source: wiki/Trattato di archeologia (Gentile)

TARQUINIA C. 700 BCE

The city of Tarquinia flourishes as a trading and manufacturing centre, producing Etruscan jewellery and pottery.

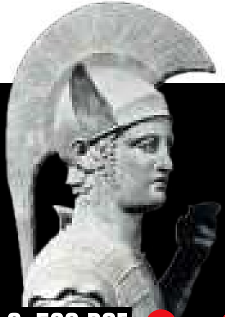
ISIS TOMB C. 570 BCE

Further tombs are built at Vulci, the Isis tomb in particular containing priceless artefacts. The tomb is incorrectly named after it was suspected a bronze bust represented the Egyptian goddess Isis.

BUCCHERO POTTERY 675 BCE

A distinctive pottery style that becomes synonymous with Etruscan civilisation, Bucchero is distinguished by its glossy-black look, achieved by reducing the oxygen in the kiln and polishing.

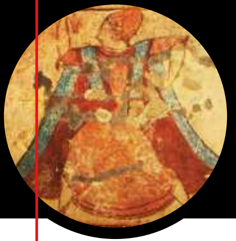
Image source: wiki/Nordisk familjebok



MARS OF TODI C. 500 BCE

Another famous work of Etruscan art, it is likely made as an offering to a god. The surviving statue is missing its helmet, shown here is an artist's impression.

Image source: wiki/llibreriaantiquariamazzeii



CONSTRUCTION OF THE TOMB OF THE LIONESSES C. 530-520 BCE

The Tomb of the Lionesses is built at Tarquinia – the woman pictured is wearing a tutulus, a popular fashion at the time. Discovered in 1875, it's one of the most famous Etruscan frescos.

Image source: wiki/asso.machiavelli

Villanovan culture 900-750 BCE

Regarded as the first Etruscan civilization, they introduce iron working to the Italian peninsula and have burial rights involving cremation and ceramic urns. This is also the period that the city of Populonia is founded - its necropolis still stands.

Etruscan tombs at Cerveteri 550 BCE

The distinctive square tombs are constructed at Cerveteri, an area covering nearly 1,000 acres and including over a 1,000 tombs. It's the location of the Sarcophagus of the Spouses, which is considered one of the masterpieces of Etruscan art.

Did you know?

The circular Etruscan tombs at Cerveteri are designed to replicate the house of the deceased

Did you know?

The most famous Etruscan king, Lars Porsena, is said to have an elaborate tomb adorned with bells and pyramids

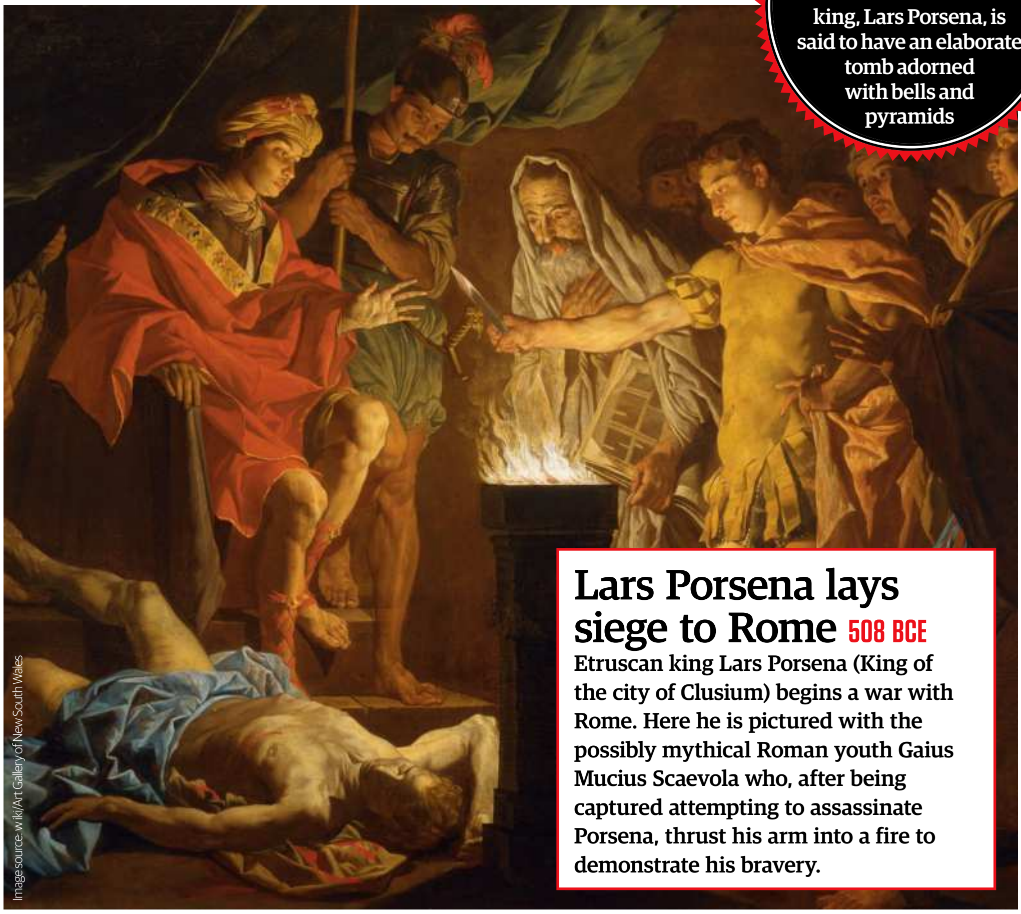
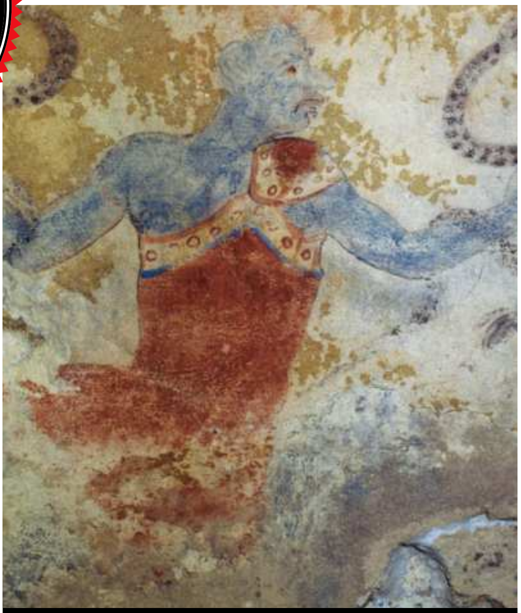


Image source: wiki/Art Gallery of New South Wales

Lars Porsena lays siege to Rome 508 BCE

Etruscan king Lars Porsena (King of the city of Clusium) begins a war with Rome. Here he is pictured with the possibly mythical Roman youth Gaius Mucius Scaevola who, after being captured attempting to assassinate Porsena, thrust his arm into a fire to demonstrate his bravery.



Tomb of the Blue Demons 420-400 BCE

Named after the blue-skinned demons that appear in its Frescos, these paintings show the deceased embarking on a dangerous journey into the underworld. The tomb is important in demonstrating that Etruscan demons already existed by the end of the 5th century BCE.

BATTLE OF CUMAE
474 BCE

The naval battle of Cumae is fought between the Etruscan fleet and the city of Syracuse, a Greek colony. The Estrucans are defeated.

420 BCE

CELTS ENTER ITALY
400 BCE

After defeating the Etruscans at the Ticino River in 475, the Celts enter Italy and settle in the Po Valley.

Image source: wiki/Archive.org

Image source: wiki/George Dennis

CHIMERA OF AREZZO
C.400 BCE

Thought by many to be the best surviving example of Etruscan art, the Chimera of Arezzo is sculpted.

ROMAN SACK OF VEII
396 BCE

After a ten-year siege the Romans take the city of Veii, beginning the long period of Roman expansion into Etruscan civilisation

SACRIFICE OF ROMAN PRISONERS 356 BCE

307 Roman prisoners are sacrificed in the forum of Tarquinia to Etruscan gods. Rome continues to attack throughout the following centuries.

C. 350 BCE

BATTLE OF LAKE VADIMO
283 BCE

The Romans and the combined forces of the Etruscans and Celtic tribes clash near Lake Vadimo. The Romans are victorious and their conquests continue.

90 BCE

Paintings of the Etruscan Francois Tomb C. 350 BCE

The Francois Tomb, so named after it was discovered in 1857 by Alessandro Francois, is one of the most important tombs from this period. Particularly spectacular are the fantastic paintings included within - shown here is a replication by Carlo Ruspi.

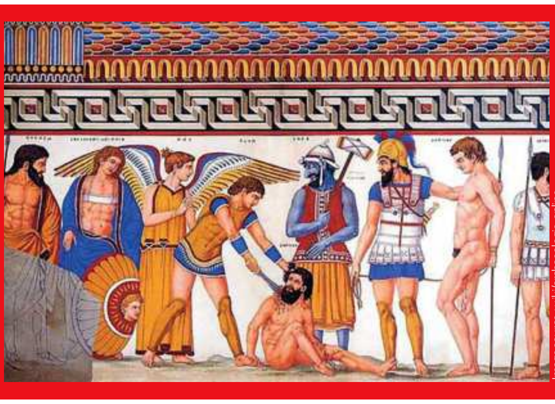


Image source: wiki/archaeologie-online

Image source: wiki/Greek Orthodox Church and Museum, Miskolc

Continued Roman conquests 90-82 BCE

Further Roman victories culminate in the former city of Vulci being downgraded to a municipium in 90 BCE and the sack of Volterra in 82 BCE. Roman general Sulla incorporates the Etruscan town of Chiusi into the Roman Republic, effectively ending the Etruscan reign.

INSIDE HISTORY

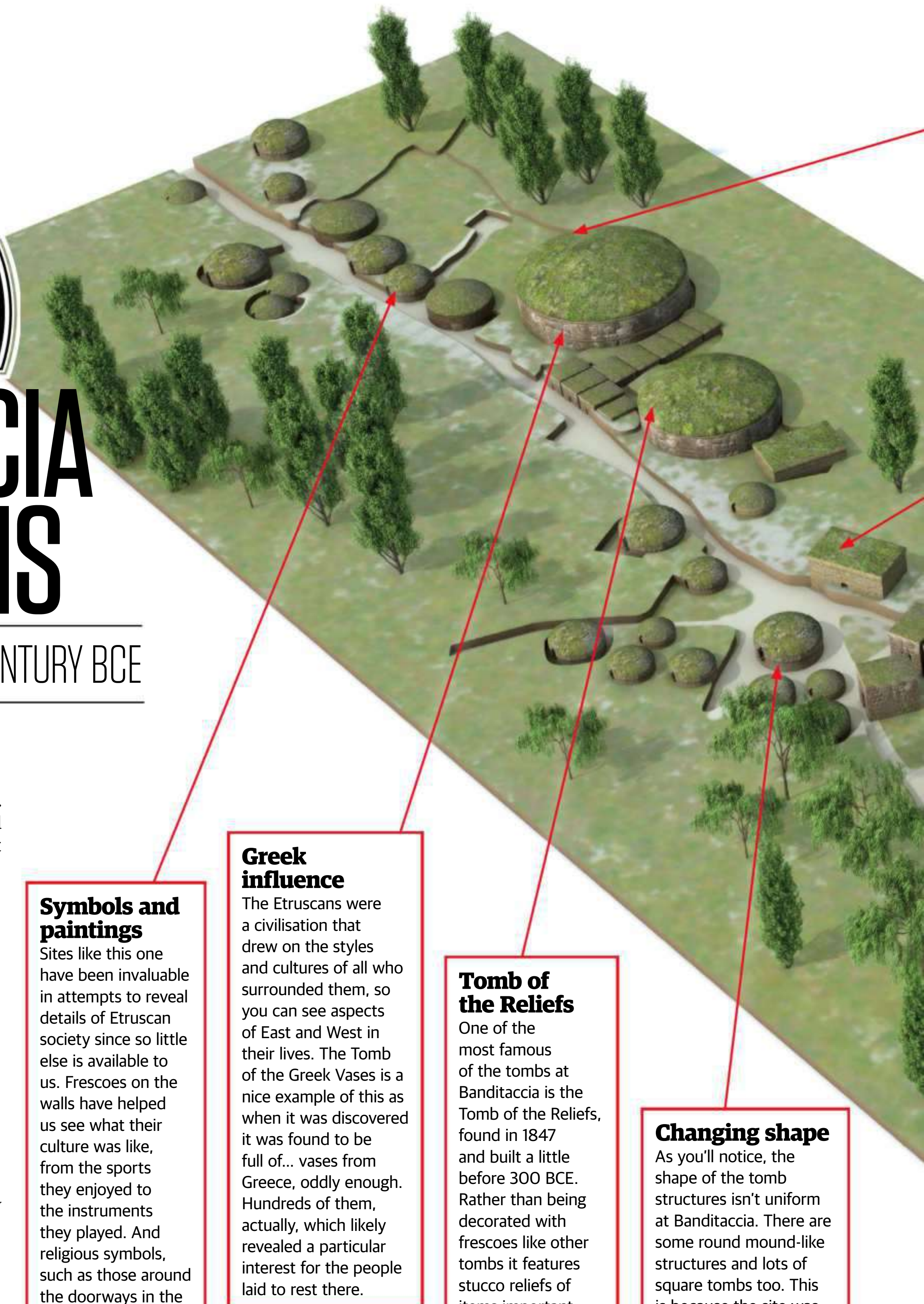
BANDITACCIA NECROPOLIS

CERVETERI, ITALY, 7TH – 3RD CENTURY BCE

The Etruscans are often referred to as a mysterious civilisation, but this isn't because they were particularly private or reluctant to make themselves known to the outside world. Instead, it's simply a matter of relevant records and writings being unavailable to modern scholars. But just because we don't have the wealth of material we might enjoy from the Romans or Ancient Greeks doesn't mean the Etruscans are a complete enigma. Thankfully, we can piece together an impression of their society and their priorities through other means.

One such source is the manner in which the Etruscans buried their dead, and the Banditaccia Necropolis just outside modern Cerveteri (about 50km north-northwest of Rome) is an incredible example of this. Named a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 2004, this 1,000-acre region is like a town, with its own roads and a multitude of buildings. What's more, it was often the Etruscan custom to decorate the inside of their tombs to resemble their homes, so these burial sites actually give us some clues as to the living arrangements of the people who are inside. Furthermore, the tombs were sometimes decorated with elaborate frescoes (and in one instance reliefs) that depict something of the dead inhabitants' interests or profession. They would be surrounded by treasures and items that represented their importance to the community.

Of course, all of these tombs would have belonged to the wealthiest and most powerful families of the region, not the regular working people or slaves of the time, so the impression we get is only a small window into the most privileged in Etruscan society. Nonetheless, it is a fascinating glimpse into the priorities and architectural skills of the civilisation that we might otherwise not have been able to discern from other sources.



Symbols and paintings

Sites like this one have been invaluable in attempts to reveal details of Etruscan society since so little else is available to us. Frescoes on the walls have helped us see what their culture was like, from the sports they enjoyed to the instruments they played. And religious symbols, such as those around the doorways in the Tomb of the Capitals, reveal a little about their understanding of an afterlife.

Greek influence

The Etruscans were a civilisation that drew on the styles and cultures of all who surrounded them, so you can see aspects of East and West in their lives. The Tomb of the Greek Vases is a nice example of this as when it was discovered it was found to be full of… vases from Greece, oddly enough. Hundreds of them, actually, which likely revealed a particular interest for the people laid to rest there.

Tomb of the Reliefs

One of the most famous of the tombs at Banditaccia is the Tomb of the Reliefs, found in 1847 and built a little before 300 BCE. Rather than being decorated with frescoes like other tombs it features stucco reliefs of items important to the Matuna family to whom it belonged. Things like an ivory folding chair, lituus (a long curved trumpet) and military equipment speak to the family's background as magistrates.

Changing shape

As you'll notice, the shape of the tomb structures isn't uniform at Banditaccia. There are some round mound-like structures and lots of square tombs too. This is because the site was gradually built up over about 600 years as building skill and style changed over time. Space would have also become a consideration as the burial ground spread out.

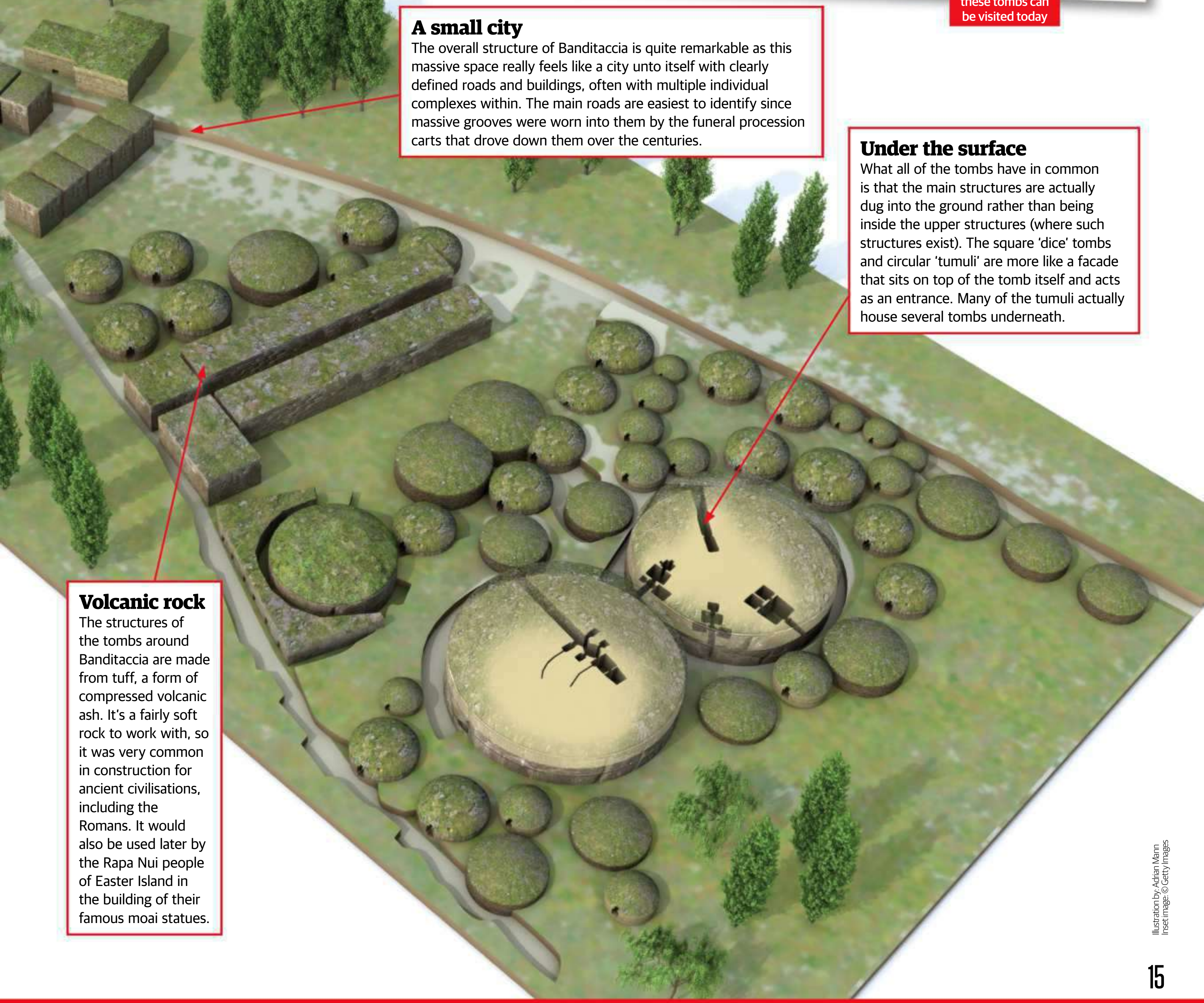
Mimicking a house

As we've mentioned, the tombs here at Banditaccia are often built to resemble the living arrangements of the people of the time and perhaps even that family in particular. The Tomb of the Hut is a fantastic example of this since it's made with a sloping ceiling and a long beam through the middle to resemble the wooden beam and thatched roof of a hut from the era.

Etruscan graffiti

Another unique location is the Tomb of Marce Ursus. This is one of the 'dice' tombs that is open to the public today, but is unmarked. It sits among a row of such tombs, somewhat resembling a row of stalls or shops. Inside, however, you can see the name Marce Ursus etched into one of the tombs, written almost like a mirror image and in an alphabet similar to that of the Greeks.

A small section of these tombs can be visited today



A small city

The overall structure of Banditaccia is quite remarkable as this massive space really feels like a city unto itself with clearly defined roads and buildings, often with multiple individual complexes within. The main roads are easiest to identify since massive grooves were worn into them by the funeral procession carts that drove down them over the centuries.

Under the surface

What all of the tombs have in common is that the main structures are actually dug into the ground rather than being inside the upper structures (where such structures exist). The square 'dice' tombs and circular 'tumuli' are more like a facade that sits on top of the tomb itself and acts as an entrance. Many of the tumuli actually house several tombs underneath.

Volcanic rock

The structures of the tombs around Banditaccia are made from tuff, a form of compressed volcanic ash. It's a fairly soft rock to work with, so it was very common in construction for ancient civilisations, including the Romans. It would also be used later by the Rapa Nui people of Easter Island in the building of their famous moai statues.

Illustration by Adrian Mann
Inset image © Getty Images

THE *Anatomy of* ETRUSCAN NOBLE

ETRURIA, 900 – 300 BCE

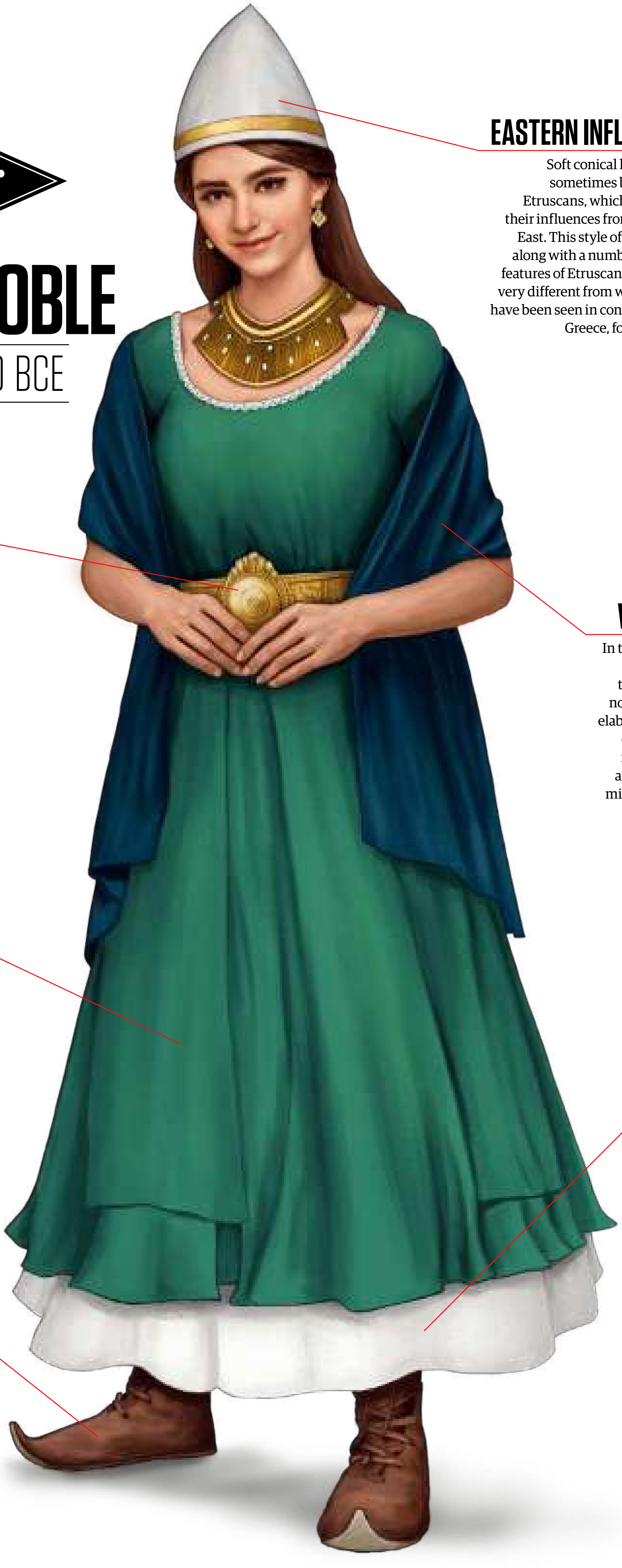


Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

EASTERN INFLUENCE

Soft conical hats would sometimes by worn by Etruscans, which speaks to their influences from the Near East. This style of headwear, along with a number of other features of Etruscan dress, was very different from what would have been seen in contemporary Greece, for instance.

BILLOWING SILHOUETTE

Unlike their Greek counterparts, the Etruscans appear to have favoured a more billowy style of clothing with loose sleeves (when they had them) and bell-bottomed skirts, sometimes with an arch around the feet to show off footwear. With a belt around the waist, this created a curved and dramatic outline.

WOOL FOR COLOUR

In this era wool would have been a much easier material to dye than some others, so Etruscan nobles in particular would wear elaborately designed and brightly coloured outer clothing made from wool. Stripes and dots of all sizes and numerous colours might adorn a noble's shoulders.

COLOUR FOR ALL

Tomb paintings give us a fantastic look at the wide range of colours the Etruscans wore. Clearly, since these were the tombs of nobles, the clothing was likely more in line with their tastes. However, there are records from Greek observers commenting on the extravagance of entertainers and slaves also being dressed in flamboyant clothing.

WEAVING SKILL

While clothing itself has not survived from this time, bronze tools have been found that show the Etruscans had loom weights, spools and spindles for creating fine cloth. In fact, the Etruscans were renowned for their linen and would often wear it as the underlayer of clothing. It was tough to dye, though, so it would remain white.

POINTY SHOES

Another influence from the Near East and Ionia, the Etruscans broke away from their contemporaries again by wearing shoes as well as sandals. These pointy shoes were a cross between boots and slippers and would have metal studs punched through the soles in order to help the shoes last longer.

Historical Treasures

CHIMERA OF AREZZO

A STUNNING MASTERPIECE OF ETRUSCAN ART AREZZO, C. 400 BCE

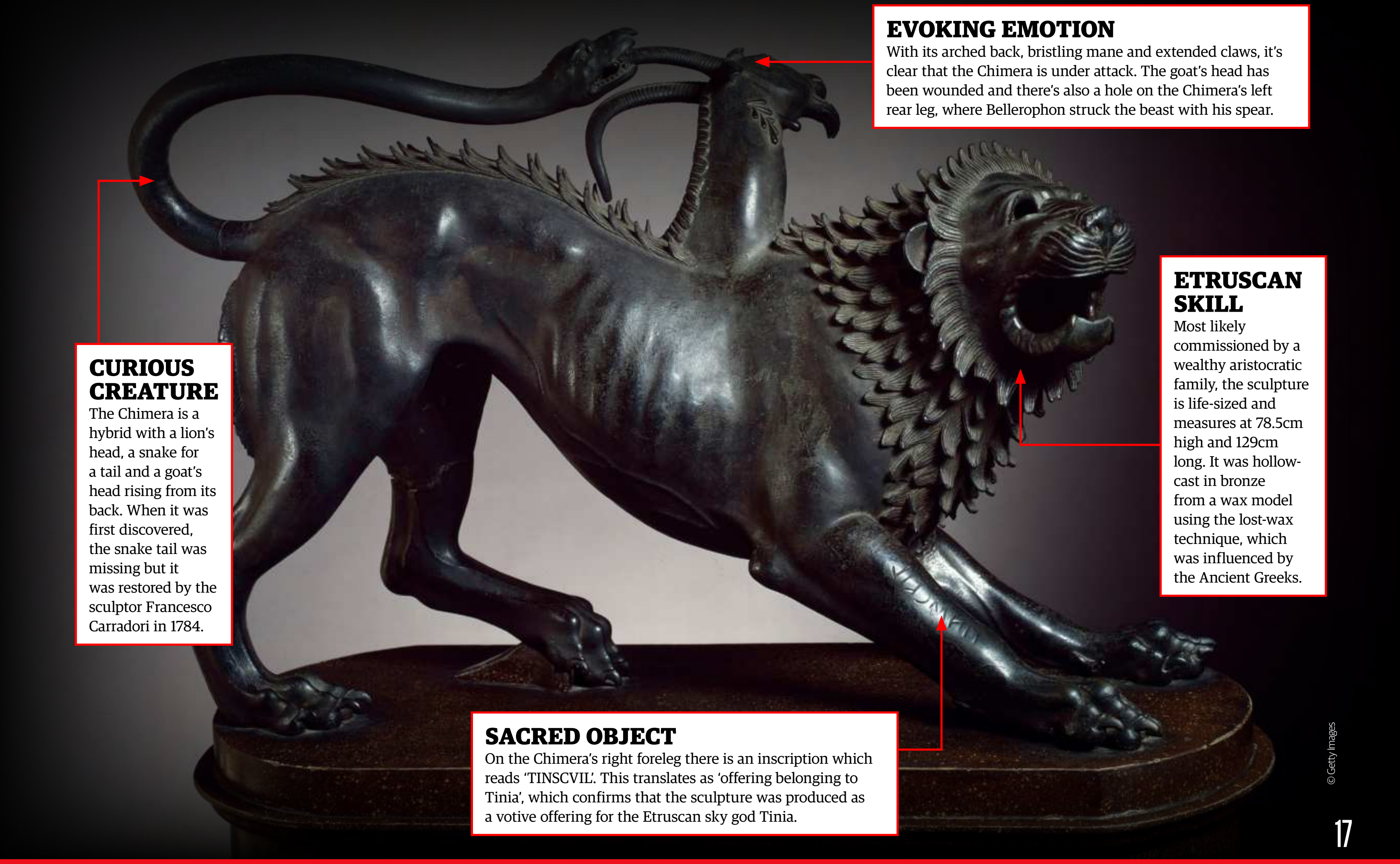
The Etruscans were skilled at bronze-working with many towns, such as Cerveteri and Vulci, specialising in bronze production. In particular, bronze was an ideal medium for creating sculptures and figurines, which were used as votive offerings and left at the sacred altars of temples or ritually buried. These sculptures frequently depicted mythological stories that were a popular and reoccurring theme in Etruscan art.

The Chimera of Arezzo is one of the most famous Etruscan bronze sculptures to have survived to this day. According to Greek mythology, the Chimera was a fire-breathing monster who terrorised Lycia, a mountainous region in Asia Minor. The king of Lycia, Iobates, asked the hero Bellerophon to kill the Chimera, and he succeeded in fatally stabbing the monster while astride his winged horse, Pegasus.

The statue was found in 1553 near the San Lorentino gate in Arezzo, Italy, while fortifications were being built in the city. It was taken to the Palazzo Vecchio to be added to the collection of Cosimo I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, who had a passion for Etruscan history. Initially, it was assumed that the sculpture was of a lion until it was identified as a Chimera by Italian painter Giorgio Vasari.

It is believed that the Chimera was likely accompanied by bronze pieces depicting Bellerophon and Pegasus, but these have never been found. Just like other Etruscan bronze sculptures, it was produced as a votive offering and deliberately buried, which is why it has survived in such good condition. The sculpture was offered to the Etruscan god Tinia, who was the equivalent to the gods Zeus and Jupiter in Greek and Roman mythology respectively.

The Chimera stands as a testament to the skill of Etruscan sculptors and is evidence that the craftsmen who produced it were likely influenced by the trends of the art and architecture created in the Attic peninsula, the region that encompassed the city of Athens. In 1718, the sculpture was moved to the Uffizi Gallery and since the 19th century it has been housed at the National Museum of Archaeology of Florence.



EVOKING EMOTION
With its arched back, bristling mane and extended claws, it's clear that the Chimera is under attack. The goat's head has been wounded and there's also a hole on the Chimera's left rear leg, where Bellerophon struck the beast with his spear.

CURIOUS CREATURE
The Chimera is a hybrid with a lion's head, a snake for a tail and a goat's head rising from its back. When it was first discovered, the snake tail was missing but it was restored by the sculptor Francesco Carradori in 1784.

ETRUSCAN SKILL
Most likely commissioned by a wealthy aristocratic family, the sculpture is life-sized and measures at 78.5cm high and 129cm long. It was hollow-cast in bronze from a wax model using the lost-wax technique, which was influenced by the Ancient Greeks.

SACRED OBJECT
On the Chimera's right foreleg there is an inscription which reads 'TINSCVIL'. This translates as 'offering belonging to Tinia', which confirms that the sculpture was produced as a votive offering for the Etruscan sky god Tinia.

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Hall of Fame

GODS OF THE ETRUSCANS

The deities that this ancient civilisation worshiped, many of whom would go on to influence future cultures in the region

APULU

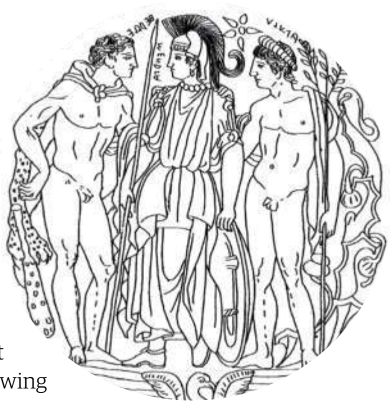
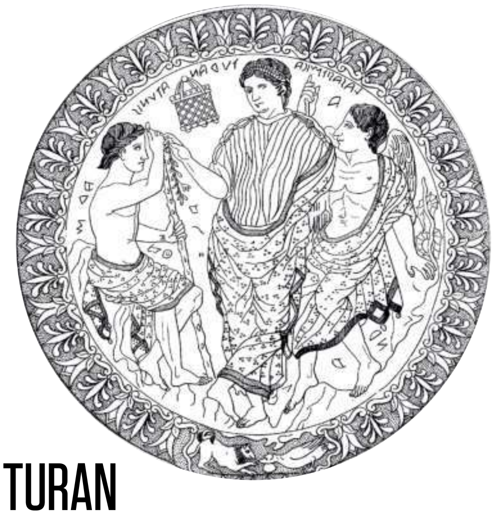


Image source: wiki/Digital Antiquity

While many Etruscan gods would go on to be adopted by other cultures (most notably the Romans) they were not beyond borrowing a deity or two themselves. Apulu is a great example, having been lifted wholesale from the Greeks' Apollo. In fact, the only thing different about Apulu is the spelling of his name, which follows the Etruscan preference for vowels. Apulu would be shown carrying Greek items like a bow, lyre and laurel, but his foreign nature was actually an asset. He's believed to have had a strong cult following in Etruria.



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TURAN

The Etruscan deity of love, peace and harmony is one of the three most important female mythological figures of this culture alongside Uni and Menrva. They even went so far as to name their month of July (Traneus) after her, which speaks to her importance. She was often referred to as 'mother' since she was shown with birds like doves, geese and swans – these were references to fertility and motherhood at the time.

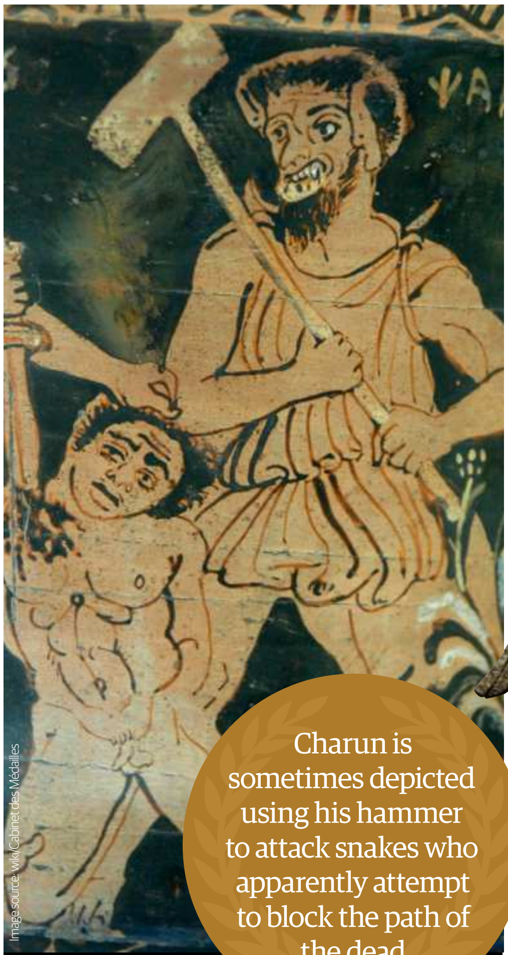


Image source: wiki/Cabinet des Médailles

Charun is sometimes depicted using his hammer to attack snakes who apparently attempt to block the path of the dead

CHARUN

One of the more outlandish-looking of the Etruscan deities, Charun plays the classic role of guiding the dead to the underworld. His name is in fact a derivation of the Greek character Charon, the old man who ferries the dead across the River Styx. Charun, however, is a much more visually arresting figure with his boar fangs, animal ears, beak, blue or green skin and wings. He also carries around a hammer, which while often appearing aggressive is actually used to defend the dead as they travel towards Hades. While he has a distinctly demonic look, Charun isn't necessarily good or evil.

USIL

Like many ancient cultures the Etruscans had a god of the sun, and theirs was one of the more dramatic in terms of how he's represented. Usil has a number of common features in Etruscan art, such as large wings and fireballs in each of his hands, and he's often depicted emerging from the ocean, sometimes driving a four-horse chariot. This was reflected in his image being used on funeral carts or chariots, where his wings were thought to enable him to ferry the body across the sky. While Usil is typically male in appearance there are examples in Etruscan art of a more feminine version.

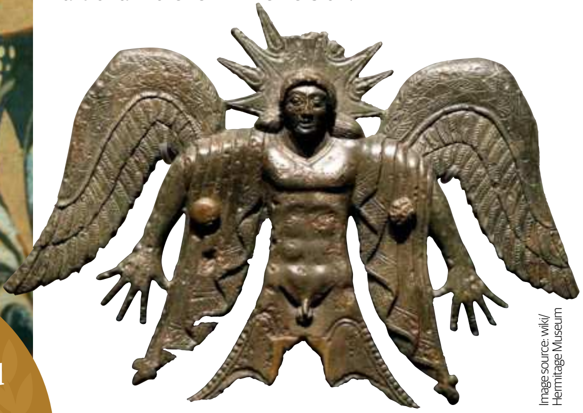


Image source: wiki/ Hermitage Museum

THESAN

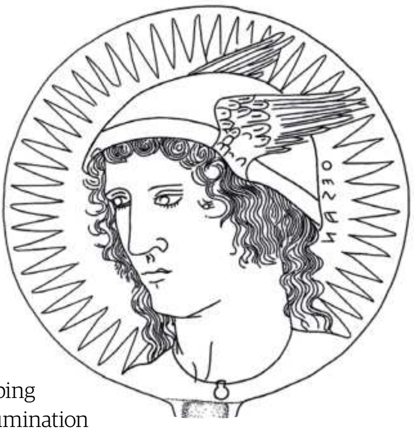
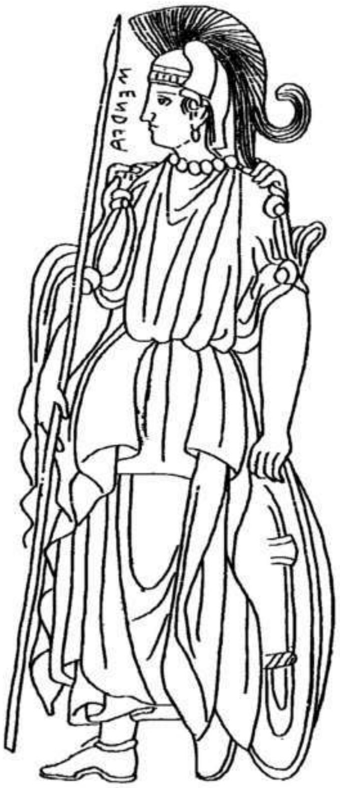


Image source: wiki/Museum Folkwang

This Etruscan goddess of the dawn, divination and childbirth borrowed rather a lot from her Greek counterpart, Eos. While a notable goddess in her own right, her name developing into words for illumination and the shedding of light on the unknown, the more salacious tales of Eos crept into Etruscan artwork of Thesan. Tales inspired by the curse placed on Eos by Aphrodite appear, as do her many subsequent lovers. It's thought that Italian myths of the spirit Tesana, who visits people as they dream before they wake, is also derived from Thesan.



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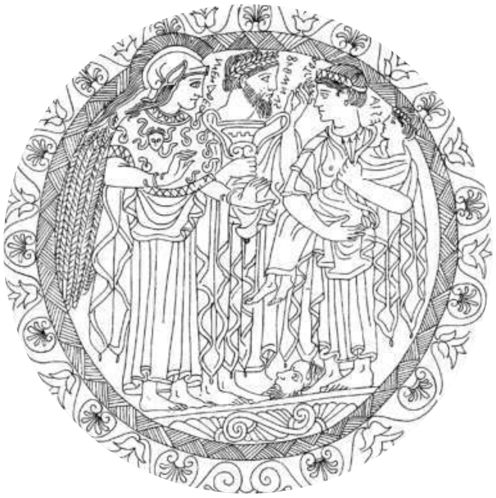
MENRVA

Another of the more fascinating gods from the Etruscan canon, Menrva seems to stand astride what seem like two very disparate worlds. She's both the goddess of war, most often seen wearing a helmet, breastplate and holding a spear, but she is also the goddess of medicine, wisdom and art. The Romans also referred to her as one of the nine Etruscan lightning wielders, as she had an association with the control of certain weather. Because of this she's not that closely tied with Greek gods, but she did inspire the Roman Minerva.



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FUFLUNS

The parallels between the myths around Fufluns, god of plants, wine and happiness and the Greek deity Dionysus are very clear. Both are said to be the sons of the head of their pantheon (Tinia or Zeus) and both have their mothers killed while pregnant. Fufluns finishes his gestation sewed to the thigh of Tinia, which is a curious image. Much like his Greek counterpart he's a popular figure in artwork, but depictions vary as to whether he's a vital youth or an old, bearded man.

TINIA

What is it about beards and leadership among the gods? Something for us to look into further, perhaps, but for now it will suffice to say that Tinia was the chief deity of his pantheon. Interestingly, unlike heads of other divine groups, Tinia doesn't come across as particularly vengeful, even though he carries around a lightning bolt. He was often considered to be a peacemaker, obsessed with balance and making sure feuds among the gods were reconciled. He was the god of the sky, husband to Uni and father of Menrva.

Variations of Tinia's name appear on the *Piacenza Liver,* which lists several Etruscan gods, but translation of the text remains a contentious matter

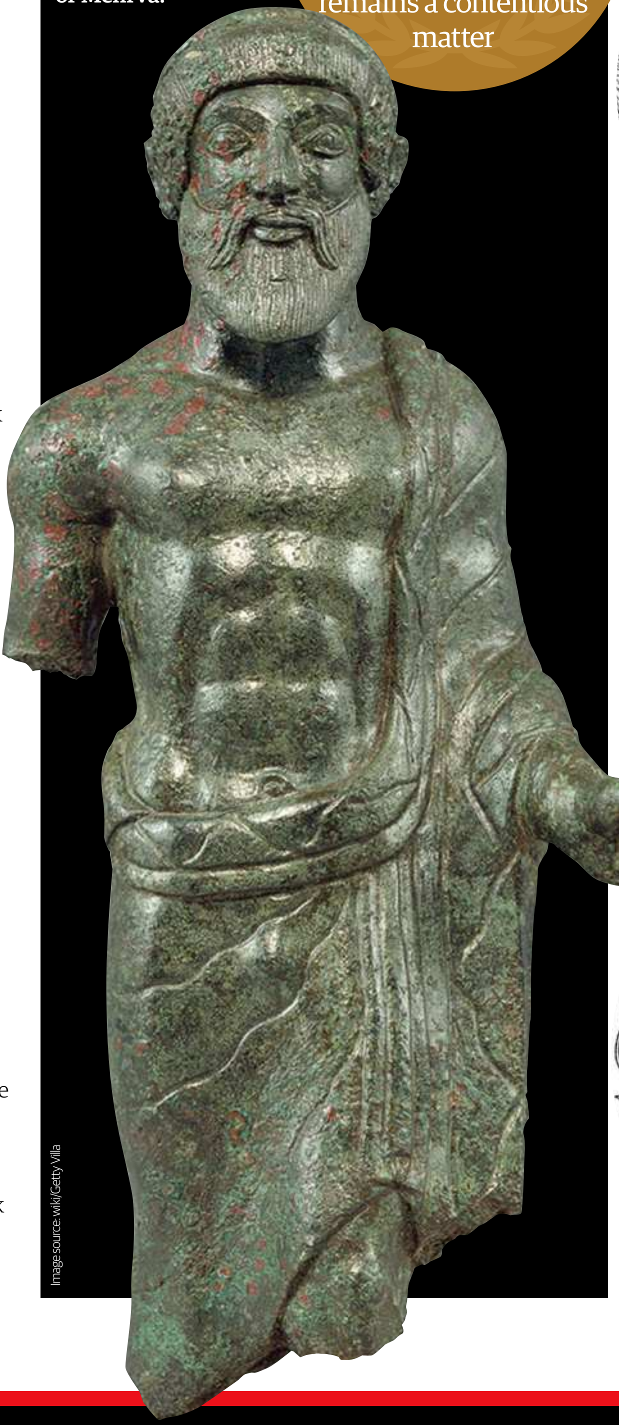


Image source: wiki/Getty Villa

UNI

The great Etruscan queen of the gods was Uni, mother to Menrva and wife to Tinia. As the goddess of marriage, fertility and childbirth she was often seen as a mother figure and there's one particular story that highlights the odd turn that role takes. She would often fight with Hercle and in one instance, after the intervention of Tinia to calm them both, she nursed Hercle from her own breast. In some versions of the story this event is what makes Hercle immortal, but typically he was already a god.

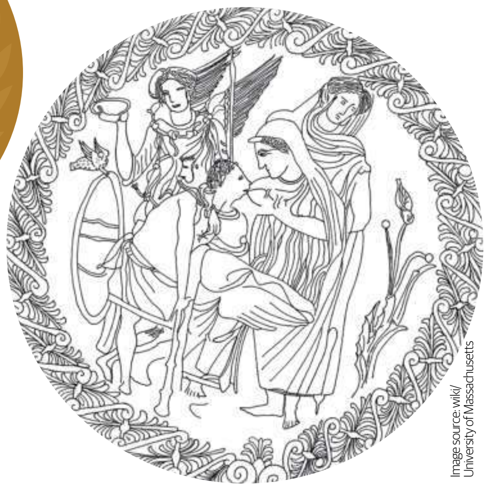
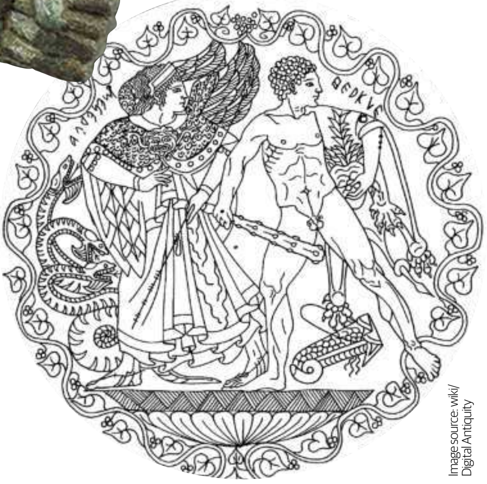


Image source: wiki/ University of Massachusetts

HERCLE

A version of the Greek Heracles and later Roman Hercules, Hercle stands apart from his other incarnations for the Etruscans because he was a god from the beginning rather than a mortal who was granted immortality (in many depictions). He also embarked on a series of new adventures and quests in Etruscan imagery that don't correlate with stories from other cultures. This would suggest that he was rather popular in Etruria, giving him a new lease of life in the mythic world.



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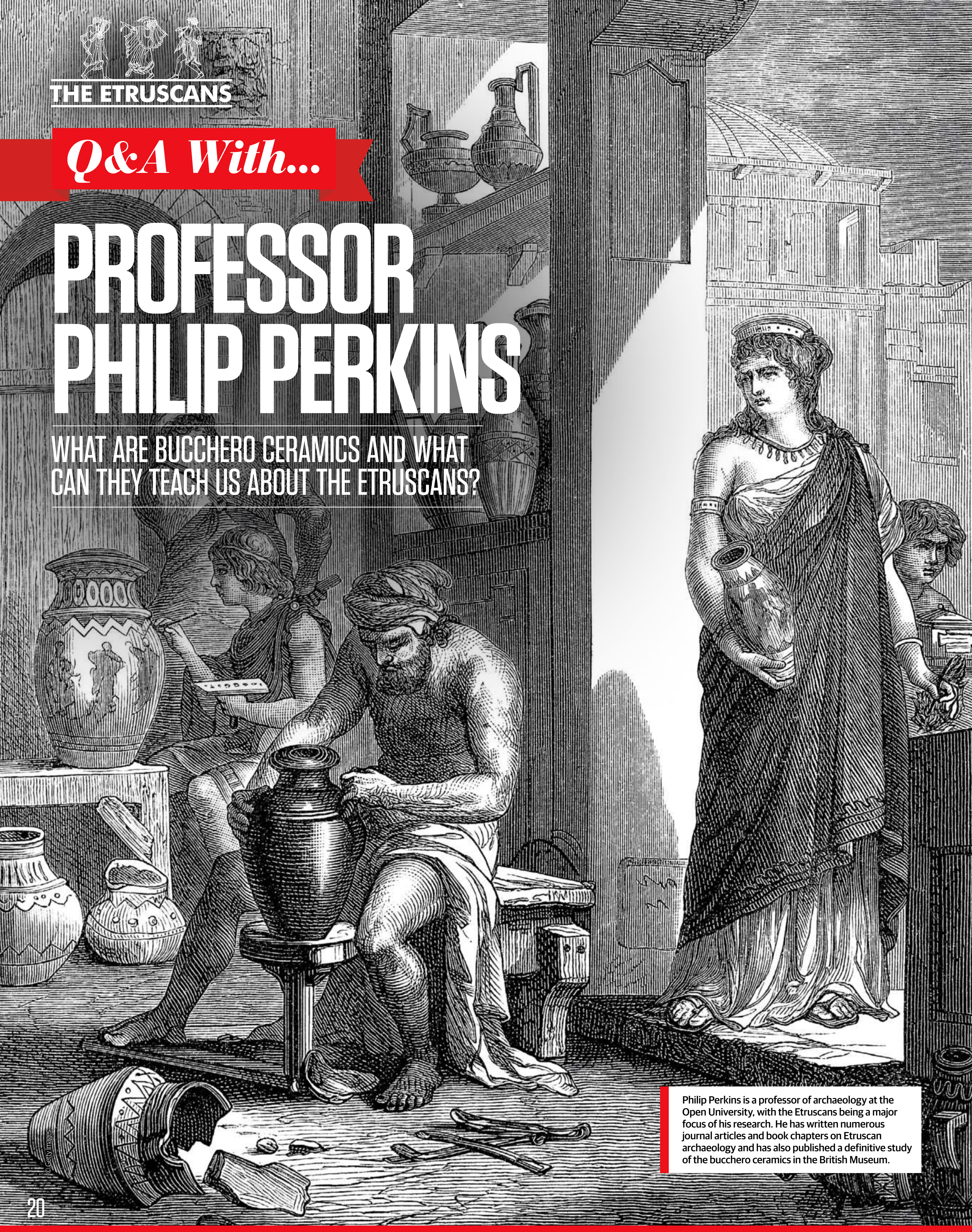
Q&A With...

PROFESSOR PHILIP PERKINS

WHAT ARE BUCCHERO CERAMICS AND WHAT CAN THEY TEACH US ABOUT THE ETRUSCANS?



Philip Perkins is a professor of archaeology at the Open University, with the Etruscans being a major focus of his research. He has written numerous journal articles and book chapters on Etruscan archaeology and has also published a definitive study of the bucchero ceramics in the British Museum.

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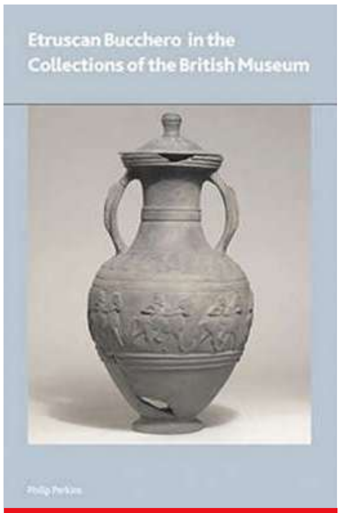
Q. FIRSTLY, COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHAT BUCCHERO CERAMICS ARE?

A. Bucchero is a Spanish word originating from South America. When the Spanish first went over there, they found black pottery with a shiny surface. It is not entirely clear why but the name was borrowed for Etruscan pottery, which is also black coloured with a shiny surface. This pottery was produced in Etruria from the early 7th century BCE and it's possible to trace the roots of bucchero pottery all the way back to the end of the Bronze Age. Bucchero started out as a luxury good, and as far as we know the first place it was made was the Etruscan city of Caere, modern-day Cerveteri, just to the north of Rome. The first items made were very elaborate and highly decorated and they shared similarities with vessels made out of ivory and also out of silver. It was a prestige good that was perhaps made for particular occasions like banqueting and feasting, for example, or to be deposited in the graves of the Etruscan elite. Gradually, over the following decades and particularly from the late 7th century BCE, it developed into a more of a commodity and eventually it ended up being in effect mass-produced, becoming the most distinctive pottery in Etruria at the beginning of the 6th century BCE.

Q. IS IT THE BLACK COLOUR AND SHINY POLISHED SURFACE THAT MAKES BUCCHERO CERAMICS SO DISTINCTIVE?

A. It is, but also the earliest bucchero has extremely thin walls, maybe as thin as two to three millimetres, which is incredibly thin for ceramics, and that's one of the connections it has with metalwork, which is usually very thin as well. It also has particular forms of decoration on the surface, and one of the distinctive ones is a pattern that's usually called a fan pattern, which looks like an open fan. Also, it can be decorated with graffito, which is basically scratching in images. Quite often they're images of animals, some fantastic animals like sphinxes, for example, but others are exotic things like lions or panthers or wild goats. Some quite rare examples have humans represented on them as part of the scenes to make humans interact with animals and there are very, very few that have scenes from Greek mythology on them. They're incredibly rare as there's only a handful of those.



Etruscan Bucchero In The Collections Of The British Museum is out now from the British Museum

Q. YOU MENTIONED GREEK MYTHOLOGY, WAS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT INFLUENCED BUCCHERO DESIGNS?

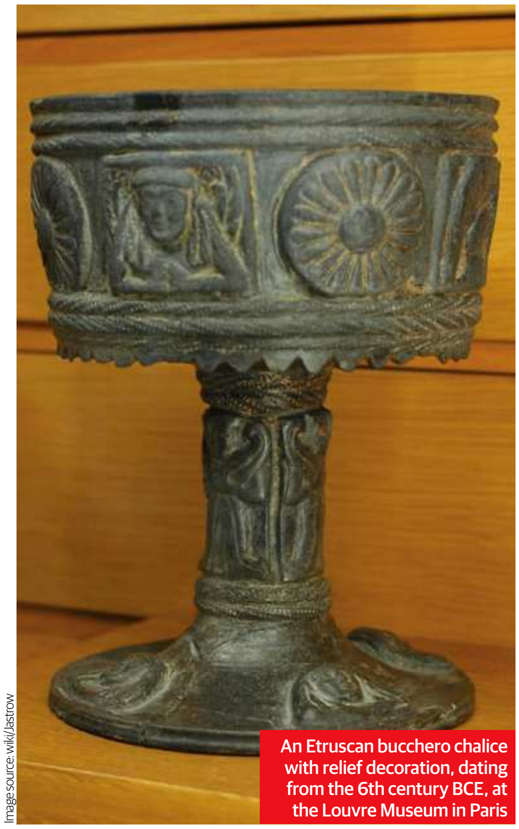
A. The Greek mythology is so rare, there are about two or three pots that have identifiable Greek myths on them, but there are really three strands that influence bucchero pottery. One is what you might call the traditional Italian ceramic techniques that take you back into the Bronze Age. Then there are influences from the Phoenician people, who traded all the way across the Mediterranean and their material culture became quite influential in Italy in the orientalising period. There's also influence from ancient Greek ceramics in the form of specific shapes, particularly ones that were common in Asia Minor, where there were Greek settlements and cities. There's even cases of the reverse process happening and the Athenians (Athens was a big pottery centre) actually copied some Etruscan shapes in return as well, which suggests how interconnected the culture and trade around the Mediterranean was at the end of 7th and 6th century BCE.

Q. WHY DID BUCCHERO CHANGE FROM BEING A LUXURY GOOD TO BECOMING A COMMODITY THAT WAS MASS PRODUCED?

A. If we knew the answer to that question we would be really happy! The technology and skills to make bucchero spread very quickly from one Etruscan city to the next, and the different locations where it was being made multiplied in the space of maybe ten, 20 or 30 years, so over quite a short timespan in terms of archaeology. It looks like there was a process of emulation, so what started off as prestige goods of the elite came to sort of symbolise the high quality of lifestyle of such people. When the pottery became more widely produced in different places, people further down the social hierarchy then had the opportunity to acquire this pottery as well, so it became almost a sort of status symbol of what well-to-do Etruscans might have. This, in turn, fuelled more production so more people could own bucchero, and even use it to represent their status in a funerary context as well.

Q. WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT THE ETRUSCAN CIVILIZATION FROM BUCCHERO?

A. It indicates the Etruscans' ability in terms of making ceramics because bucchero is a high-quality ceramic that's quite technically difficult to make. Bucchero gets traded around the Mediterranean, but one of the areas where most is found is actually southern France where Etruscans exported goods, particularly wine cups and jugs, to the indigenous people, and along with them they exported wine in Etruscan-style amphoras. So the ceramic evidence tells us that it was the Etruscans who first introduced wine and wine drinking to the people of southern France, back in the latter part of the 7th century BCE. Bucchero can also tell us about burial customs because Etruscans, particularly elite Etruscans, would be buried with feasting equipment. A lot of that was made out of bucchero, so it can tell us things about people's social class and the ideology that surrounded burial in that period as well by looking at the kind of things that people were buried with in their tombs.



An Etruscan bucchero chalice with relief decoration, dating from the 6th century BCE, at the Louvre Museum in Paris

Image source: wiki/Jastrow

Q. WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES THAT YOU FACE STUDYING BUCCHERO?

A. It is a complicated area because bucchero was made in lots of different places. It can be very easy to identify maybe 20, 30 or 40 places where it was produced, because each one is slightly different in terms of the way they made bucchero. Having said this, they all produced things that were very similar as well, so the differences between bucchero made in one Etruscan city like Tarquinia or Caere can often be quite small, so it's very difficult to tell precisely where a particular object was made. Another challenge is that most bucchero that we know about was found in tombs and so that dominates our understanding and knowledge of the ceramics. We know a lot less about the kinds of bucchero that were used at settlement sites, for example, because fewer of those have been excavated, and when you do find ceramics on such sites they're usually broken into small fragments as opposed to being complete vessels that you usually find inside tombs.

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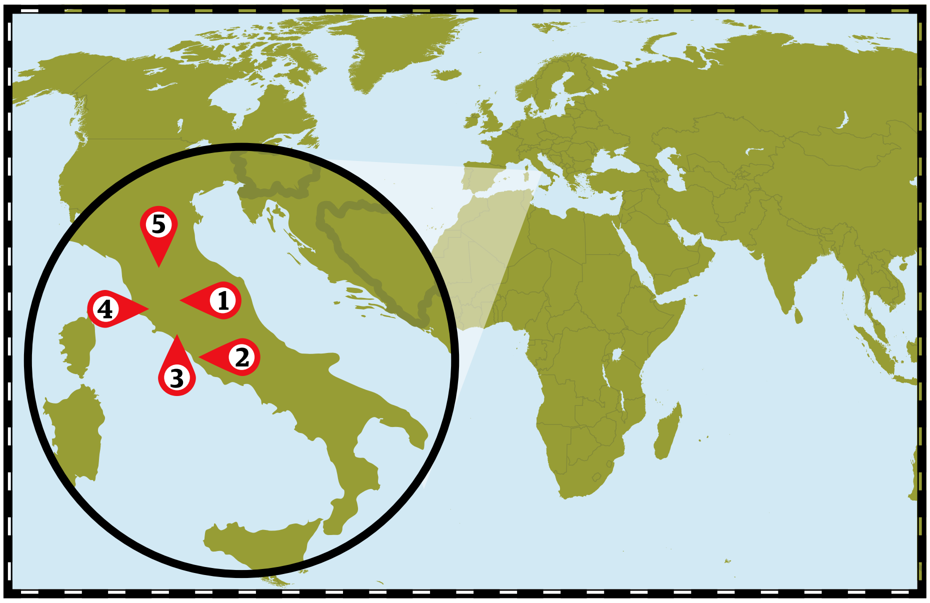
ETRUSCAN WONDERS

Immerse yourself in the history of this fascinating civilization

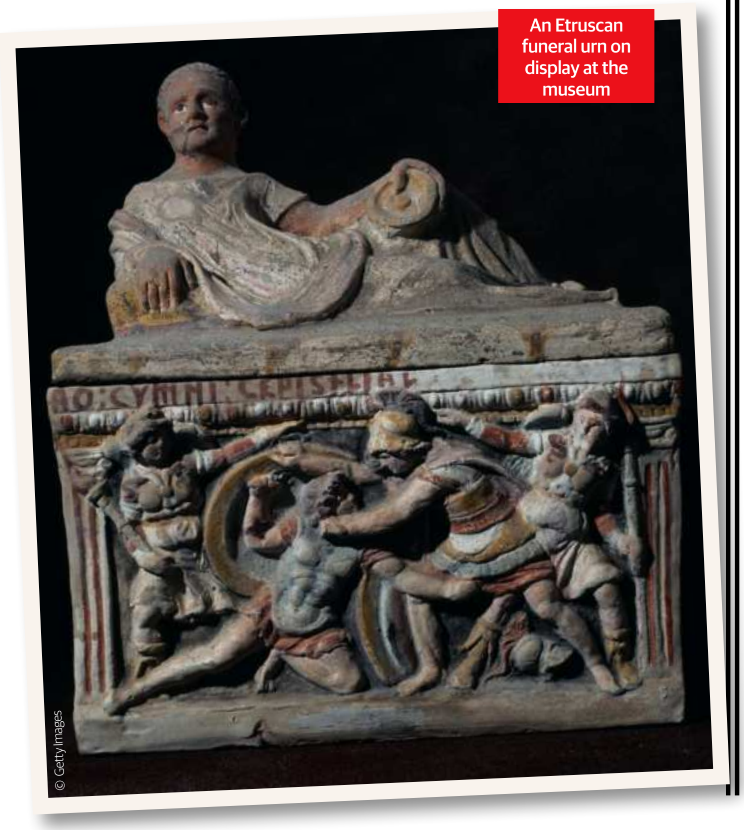


1 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY OF CHIUSI

CHIUSI

Chiusi was one of the most important and powerful cities of the Etruscan civilization thanks to its strategic position overlooking the Chiana Valley, located between Tuscany and Umbria. Today, it remains a crucial archaeological centre for Etruscan treasures and many of the artefacts excavated from the area are currently on display at the town's National Museum of Archaeology, which was founded in 1871. The exhibits are in chronological order, dating from the beginning of the civilization until its conquest by the Romans, and visitors can expect to see sculptures, painted urns, bronze objects, ceramics, jewellery and the famous Chiusi canopic jars, as well as a reconstruction of the main tombs in Chiusi. If you have time, it's also possible to purchase tickets for a guided tour of the town's Etruscan tombs including the tomb of Scimmia, also known as the Monkey Tomb, and the tombs of Leone and Peregrina.

Open daily 9am to 8pm. Average adult ticket is €6.



An Etruscan funeral urn on display at the museum

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2 NATIONAL ETRUSCAN MUSEUM

ROME

The Sarcophagus of the Spouses at the National Etruscan Museum

Image source: wiki/Gerard M

Housed in the Villa Giulia, a 16th century Renaissance palace built for Pope Julius II, the National Etruscan Museum was founded in 1899 and boasts one of the world's finest collections of Etruscan treasures. The museum is arranged chronologically, with the objects spread across two floors, and visitors will be able to see a range of sculptures, jewellery, funeral urns and pottery. Among the various artefacts on display is the world-famous Sarcophagus of the Spouses, which was discovered in 1881 in the Banditaccia necropolis in Cerveteri. Considered to be one of the greatest surviving masterpieces of Etruscan art, the sarcophagus is made out terracotta and depicts a couple reclining on a banqueting couch drinking wine together. Other Etruscan artefacts that are worth seeing at the museum include the Pyrgi Tablets and the Apollo of Veil, a life-size Etruscan statue of Apollo, both of which date back to the 6th century BCE.

Open Mon to Sat, 9am to 8pm. Average adult ticket is €10.

© Getty Images

The courtyard of the Tarquinia National Museum

An Etruscan sarcophagus at the museum

3 TARQUINIA NATIONAL MUSEUM

TARQUINIA

The town of Tarquinia, located 90km north of Rome, was once an important Etruscan city. It's home to the Necropolis of Monterozzi, which contains 6,000 graves and 200 painted tombs dating back to the 7th century BCE. The tombs were named as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2004 and the majority of the objects excavated from the necropolis can be found in the collection of the Tarquinia National Museum. Founded in 1924 and housed inside the 15th century Palazzo Vitelleschi, the museum's extensive catalogue of objects is split across three floors for visitors to explore, with items such as stone sarcophagi, bronze and gold Etruscan coins, bucchero ceramics and jewellery on display.

The museum also features a group of air-conditioned rooms which display the preserved frescos from the Tomb of the Triclinium, the Tomb of the Bigas, the Tomb of the Olympic Games and the Tomb of the Ship, four of the tombs that can be found in the necropolis. However, undoubtedly the most prized artefact on display is the high relief of the Winged Horses, which is 1.15m high and 1.25m wide. It was found among the ruins of the city's most important temple, the temple of the Altar of the Queen, and used to decorate the pediment of the temple.

Open Tues to Sun, 8:30am to 7:30pm. Average adult ticket is €6.

A bronze helmet with holes used to thread in a leather lining

© Alamy

4 ISIDORO FALCHI ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

VETULONIA

This small museum is home to centuries of Etruscan history thanks to its collection of fascinating artefacts excavated from local tombs and settlements. It's named after Isidoro Flachi, an Italian doctor and archaeologist who rediscovered the Etruscan city of Vetulonia, one of the 12 most important cities of the civilization, at the end of the 19th century. The museum has seven rooms across two floors which display the various treasures uncovered at the local necropolises including vases, urns, funerary objects statues, coins, silver and gold jewellery. Visitors can also take a look at reconstructions of the tombs, complete with the original grave goods. The most famous items exhibited at the museum are the stone stele of the warrior Auvele Feluske, which was created either in the 8th or 7th century BCE, and the Stone of Dupiane, a stone engraved with the Hellenistic alphabet discovered at the necropolis of Dupiane.

Opening hours vary throughout the year. Average adult ticket is €6.

5 GREGORIAN ETRUSCAN MUSEUM

FLORENCE

One of the first museums to be dedicated to Etruscan artefacts, the Gregorian Etruscan Museum was founded by Pope Gregory XVI in 1837 to house objects discovered during the excavations of territory owned by the Papal State. The museum has 12 rooms and each one is dedicated to exploring the development of Etruscan culture, beginning with material from the first Iron Age of Etruria and Latium and ending with the Roman conquest. Overall, there are plenty of items to feast your eyes on, including funerary urns, ceramics, relief sculptures, sarcophaguses, stone inscriptions, bronze weapons, terracottas and gold jewellery, A highlight of the museum that's not to be missed is the room dedicated to the precious antiquities discovered in the Regolini-Galassi Tomb, one of the richest Etruscan family tombs to be uncovered at the Banditaccia necropolis in Cerveteri. While the tomb itself is not open to the public, the museum does offer an interactive virtual reconstruction of it and how the tomb would have probably looked over 2,600 years ago. With a collection that spans the entirety of the Etruscan civilization, chronologically and geographically, the museum is the perfect site for anyone who's interested in this period of ancient history.

Open Mon to Sat, 10am to 5:30pm. Average adult ticket is €17.

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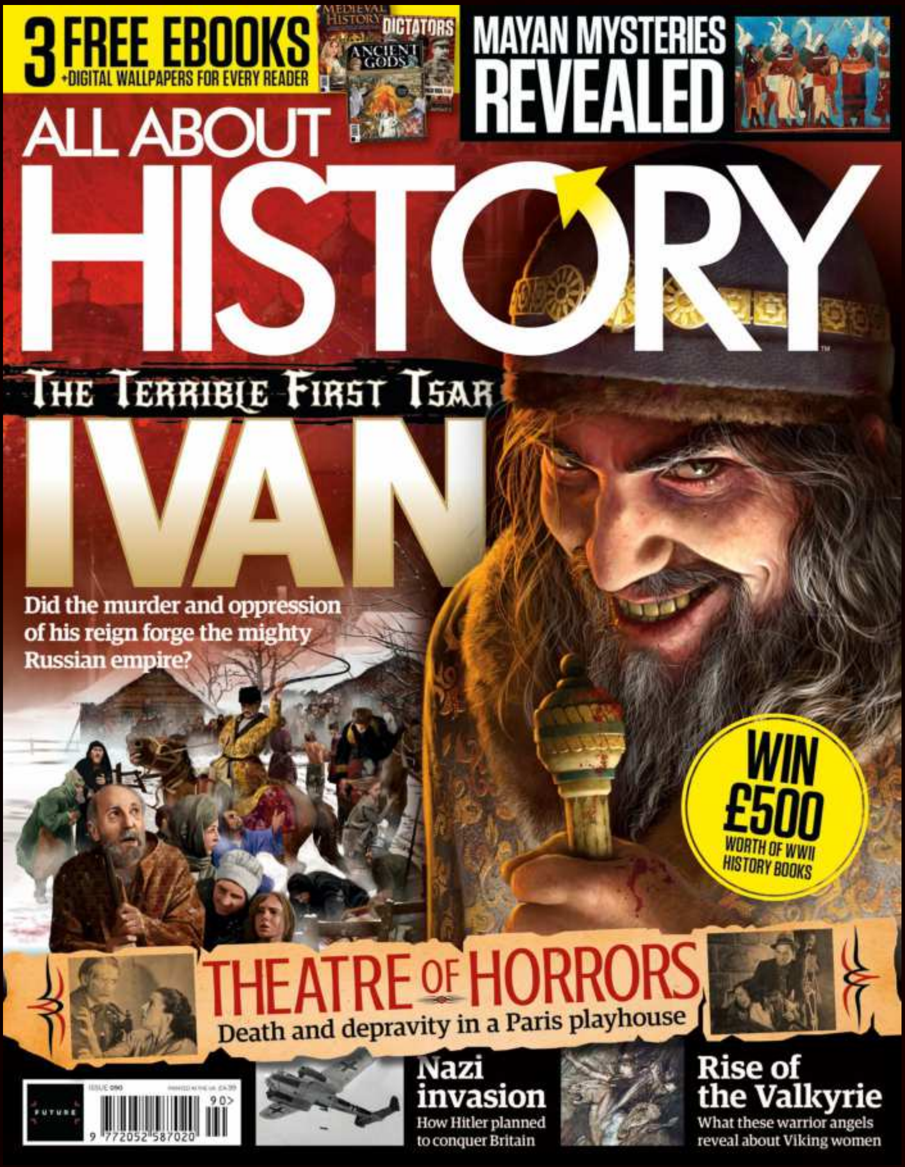
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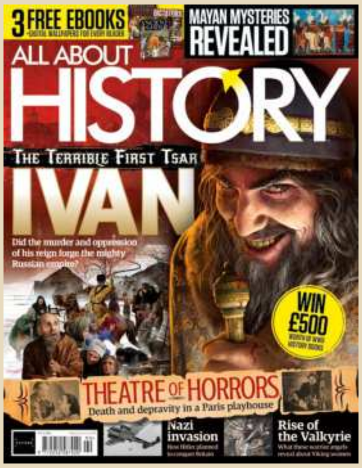

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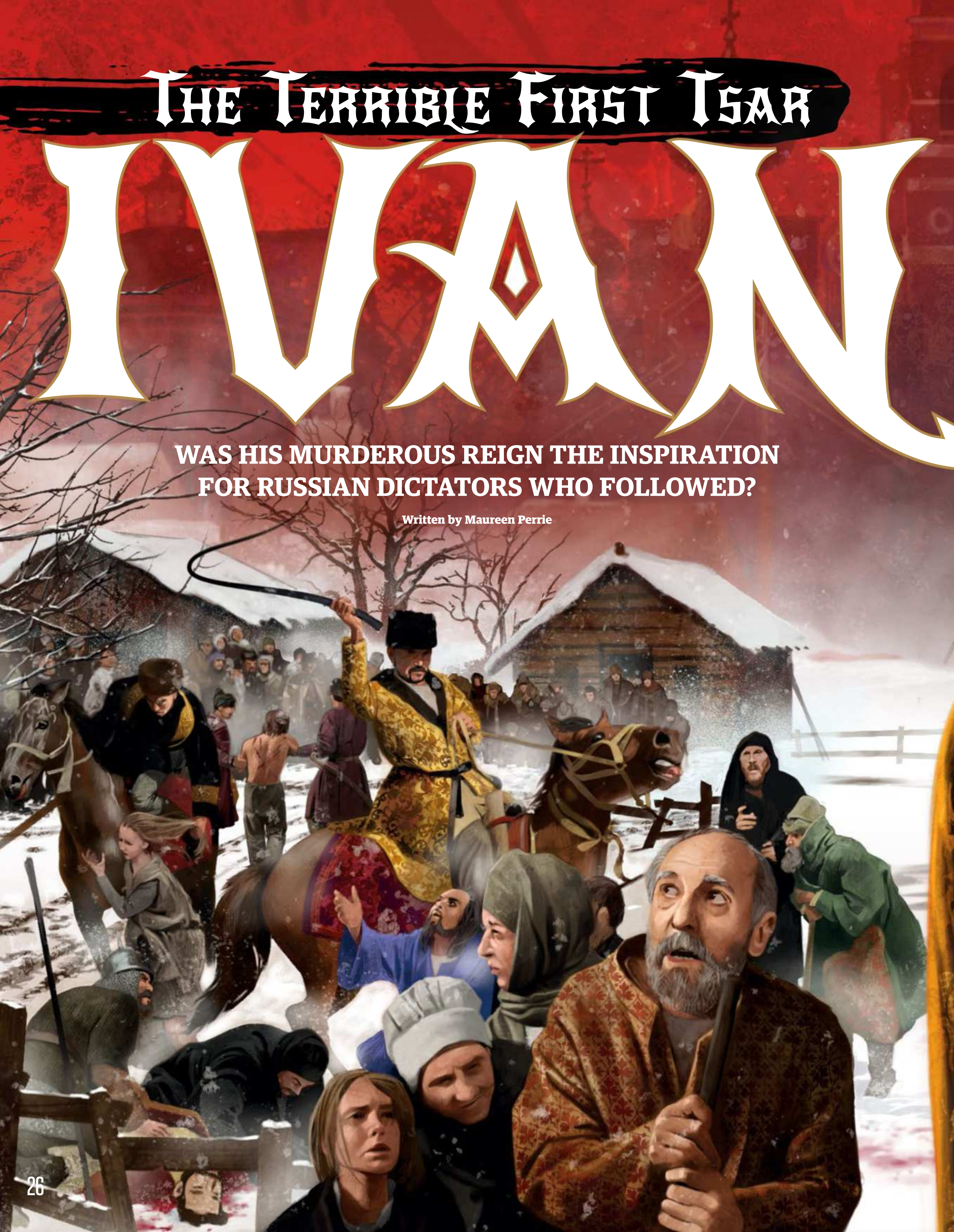
THE TERRIBLE FIRST TSAR

IVAN

WAS HIS MURDEROUS REIGN THE INSPIRATION FOR RUSSIAN DICTATORS WHO FOLLOWED?

Written by Maureen Perrie



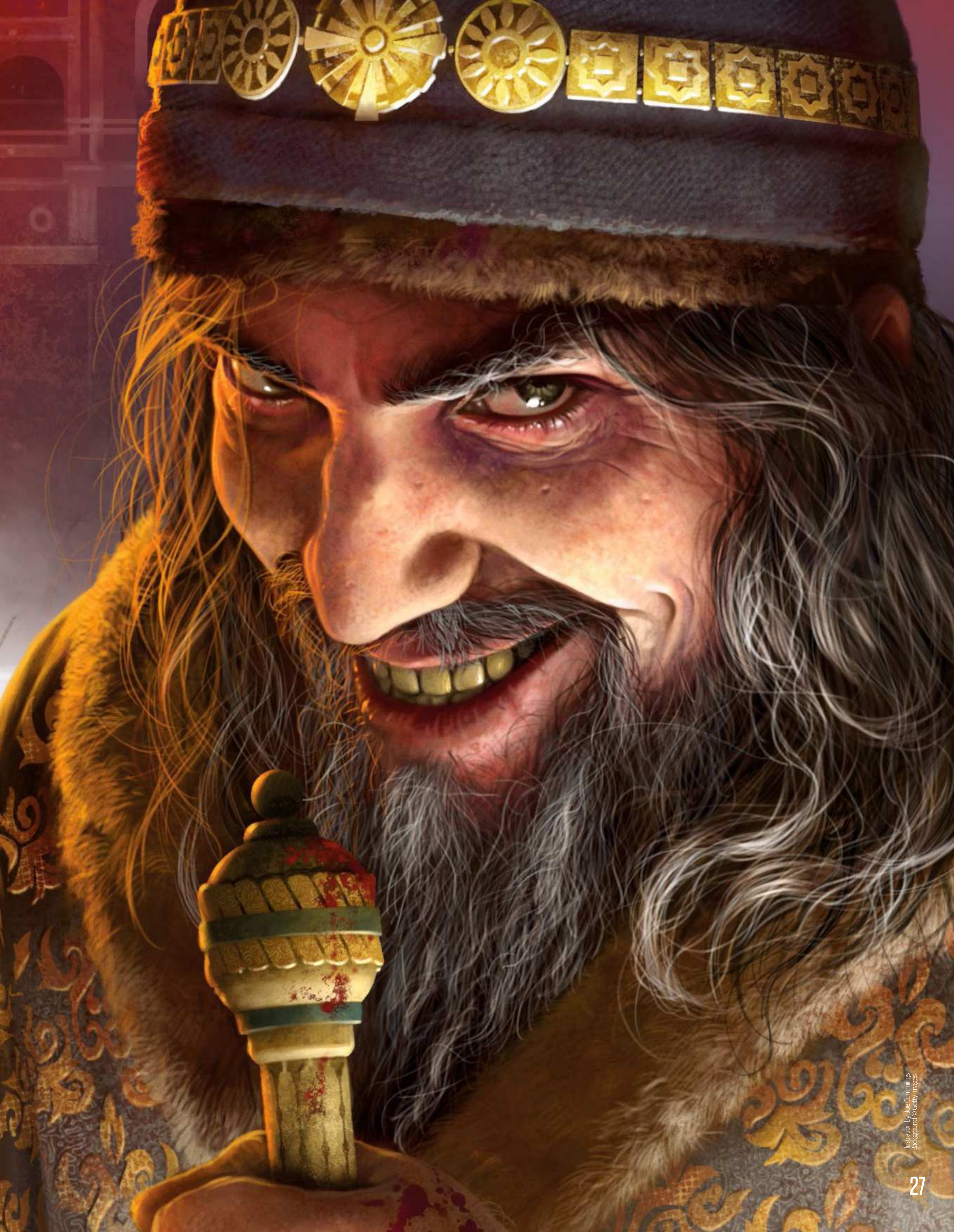


Illustration by: Joe Cummings
Background © Getty Images

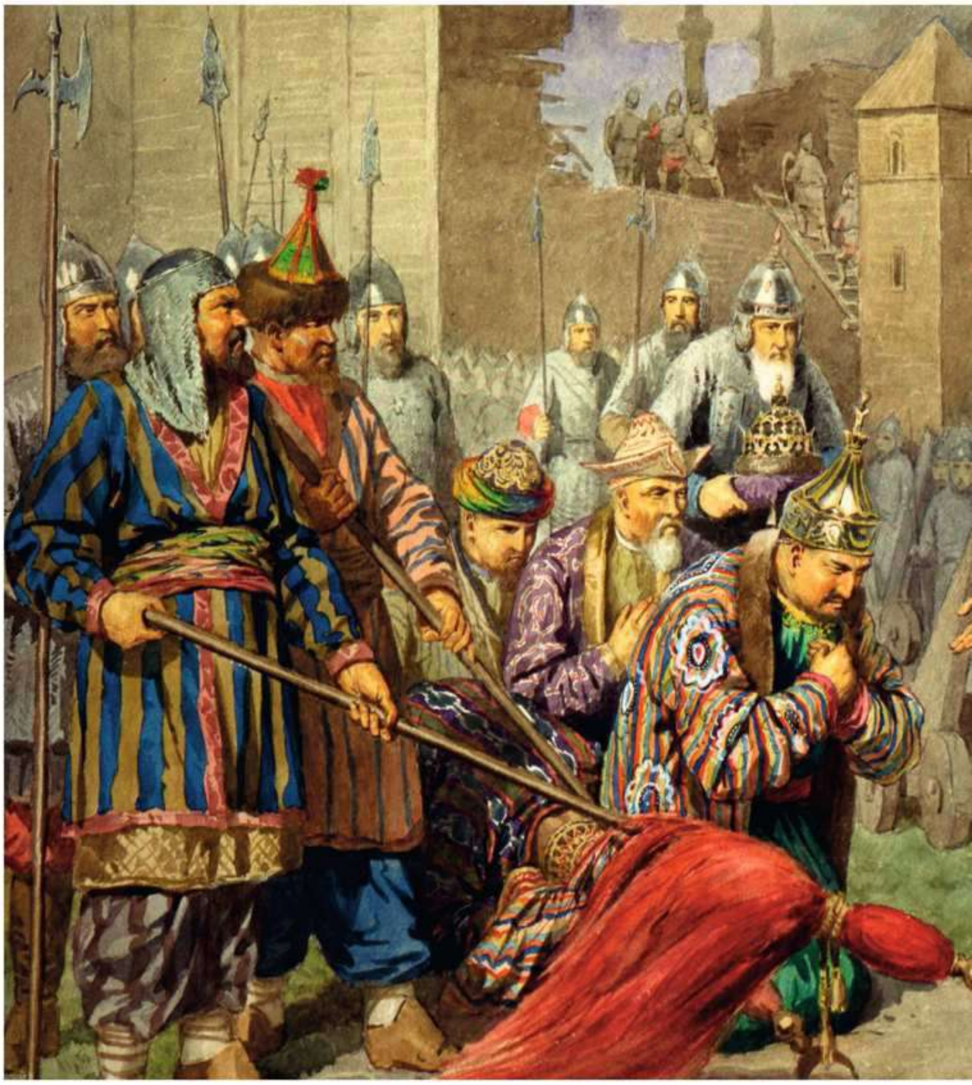
Was Ivan really 'terrible'? The Russian word 'grozny', which is usually translated into English as 'terrible', did not originally have the meaning of 'cruel and sadistic' that it has subsequently acquired: rather, it meant something like 'awe-inspiring', 'dread', or 'formidable', and generally had positive rather than negative connotations. But this does not necessarily mean that Ivan's behaviour was not 'terrible' in its present-day sense…

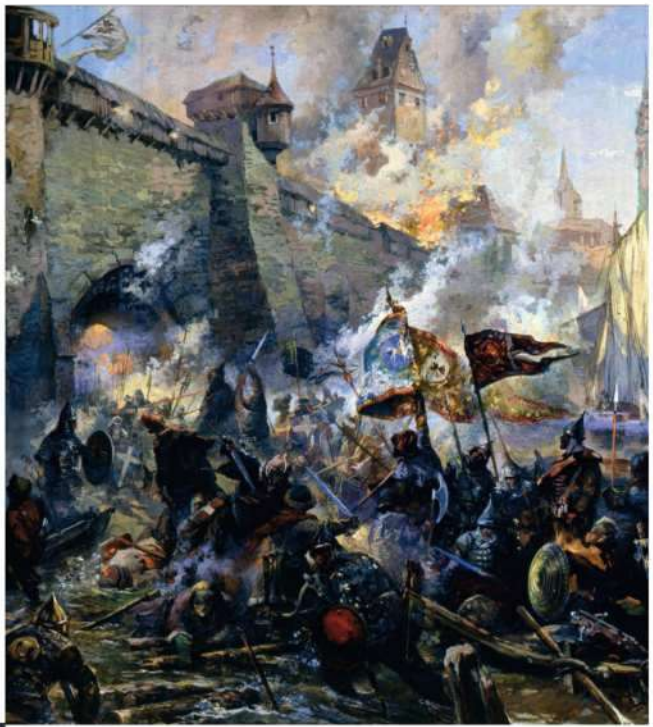
Ivan's childhood

Ivan was born in 1530, the elder of two sons of Grand Prince Vasily III of Muscovy (the name by which Russia was known to foreigners at the time). His father died in 1533, and the three-year-old boy succeeded him on the throne as Ivan IV. Muscovy was then a 'grand principality' that had expanded its territory over the previous century by annexing neighbouring Russian principalities. All of these lands, including Muscovy, had been under Tatar (Mongol) domination since the middle of the 13th century, but by the end of the 15th century Muscovy had become an independent realm.

After the death of Vasily III his widow, Elena Glinskaya, acted as regent for her small son. Elena died in 1538, and her death was followed by a period of intense conflicts at court for influence over the young Ivan. Various clans of boyars (the grand prince's aristocratic counsellors) clashed in often bloody rivalry. Ivan himself was very embittered about his childhood powerlessness. He later complained that he and his younger brother had been inadequately fed and clothed, and that one of the courtiers had dared to lounge in the royal apartments "leaning with his elbows on our father's bed" and ignoring the two little princes who were playing nearby. Ivan's resentment of the behaviour of the boyars during his minority may have influenced his attitude towards them later in his life.

Ivan's alleged ill-treatment at the hands of the boyars in his childhood may also have contributed to his well-documented fiery temper as an adult, but it is possible that he had an innate bad character. The boyar Prince Andrei Kurbsky, one of Ivan's fiercest critics, claimed that from the age of 12 the young grand prince threw small animals from the roofs of houses and that from the age of 15 he would ride through public squares with his rowdy young companions, beating and robbing ordinary people as they went. This, however, was written much later, and Kurbsky could have been influenced by hindsight in seeing the mature Ivan's behaviour foreshadowed in his boyhood.





LEFT The Russian army captures Narva (in modern-day Estonia) during the Livonian War

EXPERT BIO

MAUREEN PERRIE

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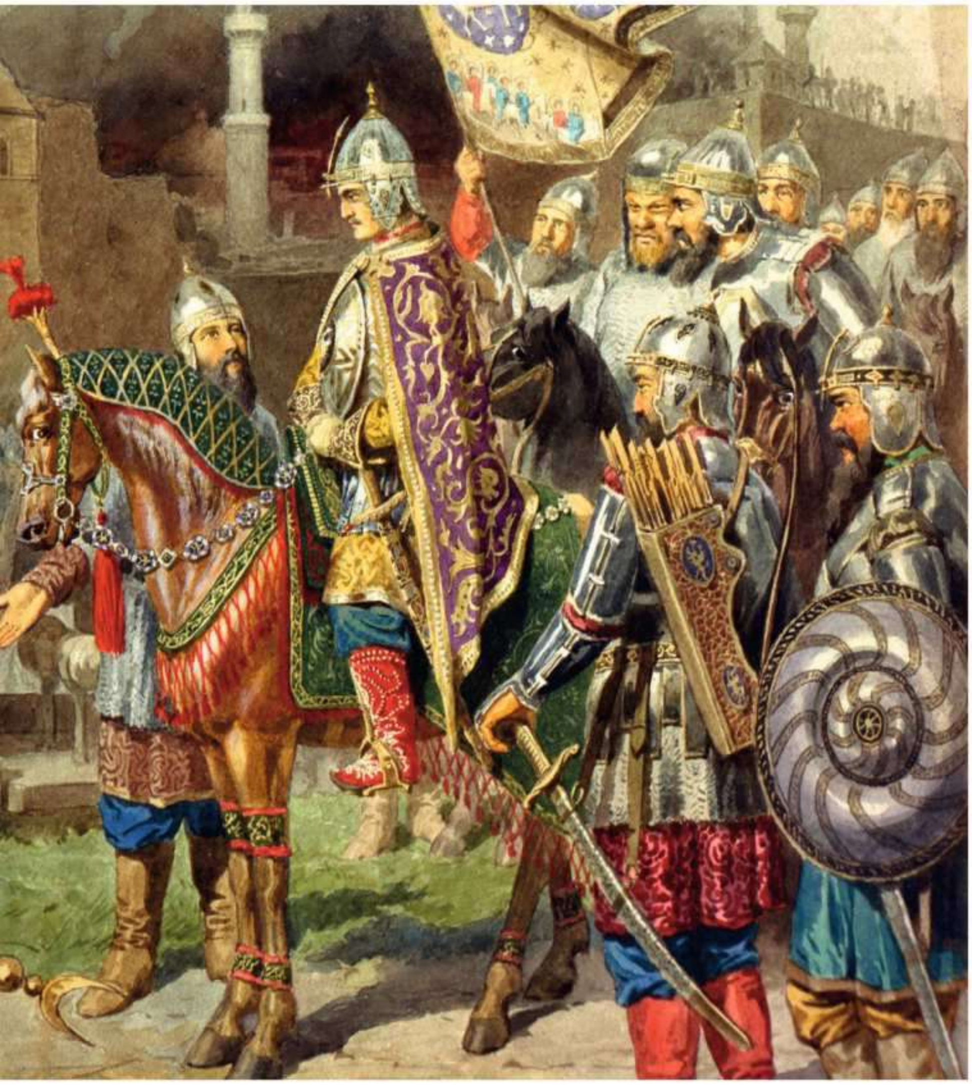
The title of 'tsar'

When he reached 16, Ivan was considered to have come of age, and it was time for him to be crowned. In a break with Muscovite tradition, he took the official title not only of 'grand prince', but also of 'tsar'. The Russian word 'tsar' derived from the Latin 'caesar', the title of the Roman emperors. But in Ivan's day it was also used for the Tatar khans (rulers) who governed the khanates such as Kazan and Astrakhan, on the River Volga, which survived from the Mongol 'Golden Horde' that had dominated so much of eastern Europe in the late Middle Ages. 'Tsar' was also the Russian translation of the title of the Byzantine emperors whose rule had come to an end with the conquest of Byzantium (Constantinople, present-day Istanbul) by the Turks in 1453. Byzantium had fallen to the Muslim Turks at roughly the same time as Muscovy had liberated itself from the Muslim Tatars, and the leaders of the Russian branch of the Eastern Orthodox Church



"By adopting the title of 'tsar', the Russian ruler was declaring himself to be the heir to the Byzantine emperors"

came to see Muscovy as the successor to Byzantium as the world's only independent Orthodox Christian realm. By adopting the title of 'tsar', the Russian ruler was declaring himself to be the heir to the Byzantine emperors, who in their turn had seen themselves as successors to the Roman Empire. This continuity was expressed in the notion of Moscow as 'the third Rome' (in which Byzantium was the 'second Rome'). But Ivan's link with Byzantium was more explicitly stated at the time of his coronation by the legend of Vladimir Monomakh, the 12th-century grand prince of Kiev, who'd supposedly received a crown (the 'cap of Monomakh') and the title of tsar from the Byzantine emperor Constantine Monomachus. Monomakh was an ancestor of the Muscovite grand princes, and since he had claimed to be descended from the Roman caesars, Moscow could claim a connection through him with the Byzantine and Roman empires, as well as with Kiev, which had been the capital of the Russian lands before the Mongol invasion, but subsequently became part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

In the ritual for Ivan's coronation, yet another resonance of the term 'tsar' was evoked. It was used in Russian for Old Testament

ABOVE Ivan The Terrible conquered Kazan in 1552. Many of its inhabitants were then massacred

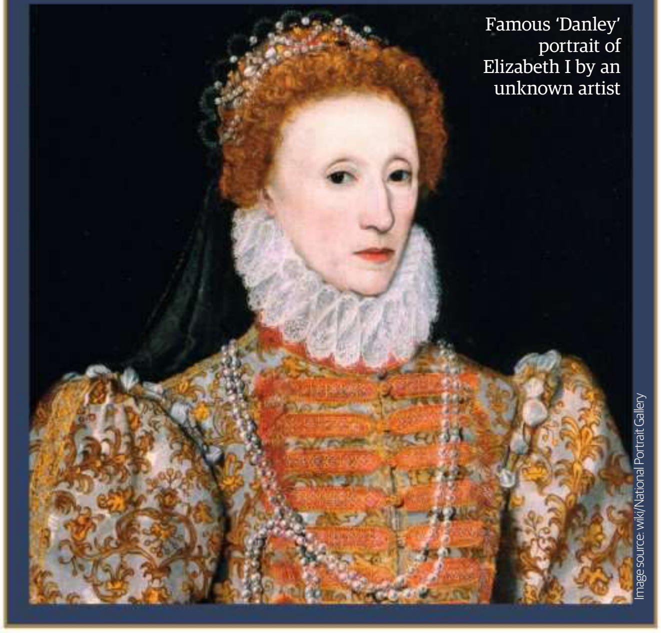
RIGHT This painting depicts Ivan flaunting his riches to Queen Elizabeth's ambassador

IVAN AND ELIZABETH

The odd connection between the Russian Tsar and the Virgin Queen

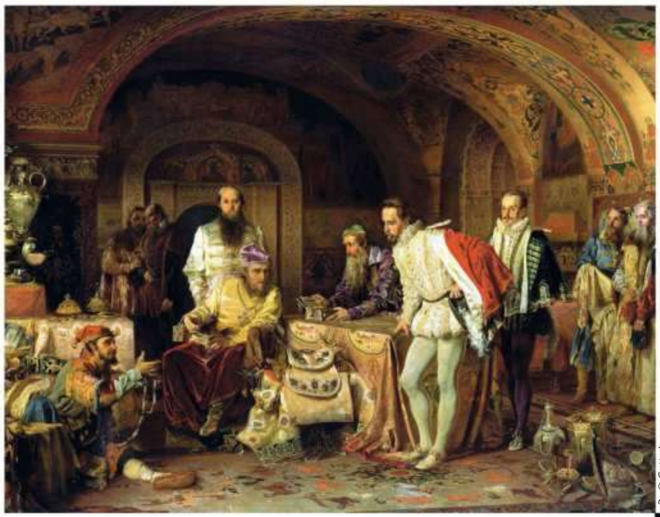
◆

Ivan began a close relationship with England in 1553 when Richard Chancellor (representing the Muscovy trading company) visited Ivan's court. Ivan allowed the Company to trade freely throughout the White Sea and the port of Arkhangelsk. Due to his favouritism towards English merchants, Ivan was able to engage in correspondence with the queen herself. Initially Ivan thought that he was being offered the hand of marriage, though fortunately Elizabeth was able to dissuade him. After this, their relationship appears to have been one of respect as, at one point fearing a revolt by the boyars, Ivan asked for a guarantee of asylum. Elizabeth surprisingly agreed, as long as he fend for himself, that is. Despite being sometimes difficult (in a letter Ivan blames her reluctance to assist him on her being a woman) their relationship is a remarkable period in Russo/Anglican relations.



Famous 'Danley' portrait of Elizabeth I by an unknown artist

Image source: wiki/National Portrait Gallery



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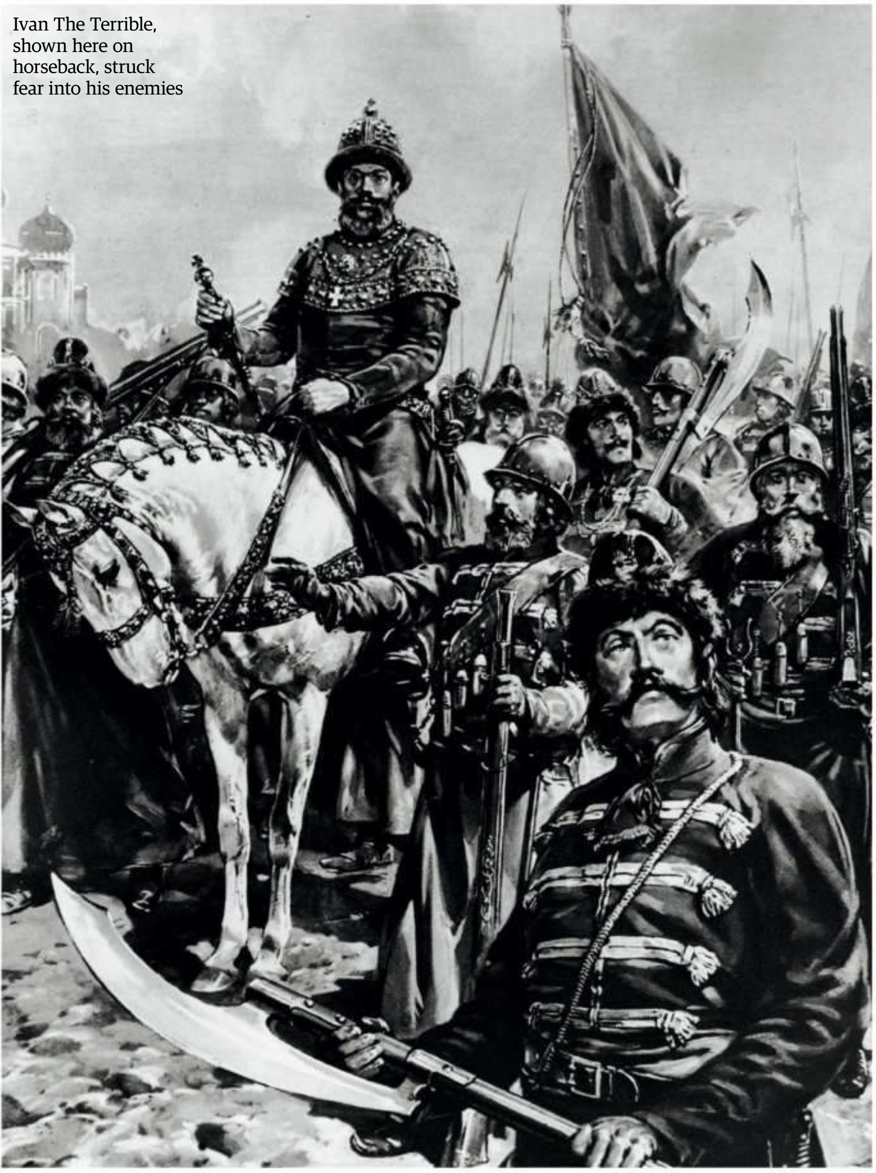
Ivan The Terrible, shown here on horseback, struck fear into his enemies



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kings, and in the coronation ceremony Metropolitan Makary, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, drew a parallel between the new tsar and King David of Israel. Sixteenth-century Russians liked to present Moscow as the 'new Jerusalem', and they saw themselves as God's chosen people, like the biblical Jews. All of the ideological baggage that surrounded the young Ivan at the time of his coronation must have given him an inflated sense of the importance of his position. The official idea of the divinely ordained power of the tsar was however at variance with Russian reality, and Ivan was to become increasingly frustrated with the constraints that persisted on his authority, even after he had formally become the Muscovite ruler in his own right.

At first, though, all seemed to be going so well...

The early years of Ivan's reign

In the course of the 1550s Ivan's government, led by his trusted advisers, the nobleman Aleksey Adashev and the priest Sylvester, introduced a number of important reforms to the domestic political system, including a new Law Code in 1550 and a series of administrative and financial reforms in central and local government. At the same time, Metropolitan Makary presided over a Church Council in 1551 that led to significant improvements to the administration of the Orthodox Church.

The main achievement of the early part of Ivan's reign, however, lay in foreign policy. In 1552 the Russians conquered the Tatar khanate of Kazan, and in 1556 they also annexed Astrakhan, situated at the mouth of the River Volga where it enters the Caspian Sea. These victories meant that Moscow now controlled the entire Volga basin. They opened up opportunities for trade across the Caspian Sea to Persia and Central Asia, and created the potential for further expansion into the North Caucasus and Siberia. At the very end of Ivan's reign, cossacks led by their chieftain Ermak defeated the Siberian khan Kuchum, and soon afterwards western Siberia was incorporated into Muscovy.

The conquest of Kazan was seen as a great triumph for Russian military might, and a great victory of Christianity over Islam. The annexation of the khanate seemed to justify Ivan's adoption of the title of tsar in the sense of 'khan', while the title in its sense of 'emperor' was validated by Muscovy's acquisition of its own empire: territory inhabited by many non-Russian and non-

How Terrible Was 'the Terrible'?

There's a plethora of gruesome horror stories surrounding Ivan, but just how terrible was he in reality?

C.1565
Ivan introduces laws limiting the mobility of peasants and adding a clause giving more control to landowners, eventually leading to serfdom.

1565-1572
Creates the oprichnina, a state policy including mass repression of the boyars with public executions and confiscation of land.

1565-1572
This is run by individual oprichnik, state police wearing black, and reporting directly to Ivan. They commit many atrocities, once supposedly stripping a servant girl and using her for target practice.

1570
As a reprisal for alleged 'treasonous behaviour' Ivan launches the Massacre of Novgorod: anywhere between 2,700-27,000 are killed and the cruelty is extreme.

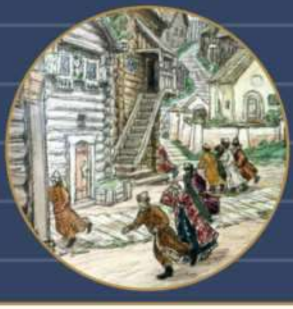


Image source: wiki/Apollinary Vasnetsov

C.1565-1572
Jerome Horsey writes how Prince Boris Tepula is impaled, where he languishes for 15 hours while his mother is forced to watch.

Christian peoples. The capture of the Volga khanates was also used to strengthen Ivan's imperial claim of continuity with Kiev, Byzantium and Rome. An inventive literary work, the *History Of Kazan*, declared that the Russians had now regained lands that before the Mongol invasion had belonged to Ivan's ancestor, the 10th-century Prince Vladimir of Kiev.

Emboldened by these successes in the east, Ivan turned his attention to the west, where he also hoped to acquire territory that had once been controlled by the grand princes of Kiev. Important commercial ports on the eastern Baltic Sea had been occupied since the 13th century by the Livonian Knights, a Germanic military order, which obstructed trade between Muscovy and western Europe. On the pretext that the Knights had refused to pay him an obsolete tribute, Ivan's troops invaded Livonia in 1558. Their initial campaign was successful, and the Russians seized a number of towns in present-day Estonia, including the port of Narva. Ivan was however unable to maintain the momentum of these first victories, and the Livonian War dragged on for a quarter of a century, involving not just Muscovy and Livonia, but all the other major powers in the region: Poland-Lithuania, Denmark and Sweden. By the time the war eventually ended, Ivan had had to surrender most of his gains, and the cost of the fighting, in terms of loss of life and economic damage, had imposed enormous strains on the country. Against the background of failures in the Livonian War, the tsar's suspicions were raised of treasonous intentions on the part of his boyars and military commanders, many of whom did in fact defect.

> **"The cost of the fighting, in terms of loss of life and economic damage, had imposed enormous strains on the country"**

By the beginning of the 1560s, Ivan had already fallen out with his leading advisers, probably because he felt they had excessive influence on policy decisions. Adashev and Sylvester were dismissed in 1560. The tsar's cousin, Prince Vladimir Staritsky, who was at that time the only adult member of the royal family with a potential claim to the throne, fell into disgrace in 1563. A number of other prominent courtiers were arrested, and some were executed. We do not know exactly what lay behind these repressions: the victims were usually only accused vaguely of 'treason'. In April 1564 one of the tsar's leading generals, Prince Andrei Kurbsky, fled to Lithuania and wrote to Ivan, accusing him of shedding innocent Christian blood. The tsar was evidently stung by this challenge to his self-image as a benevolent, divinely appointed monarch, and he dispatched a lengthy reply, asserting his right to reward or punish his subjects as he saw fit.

But Ivan didn't just challenge his opponents in writing: within a few months he had taken drastic action against them.

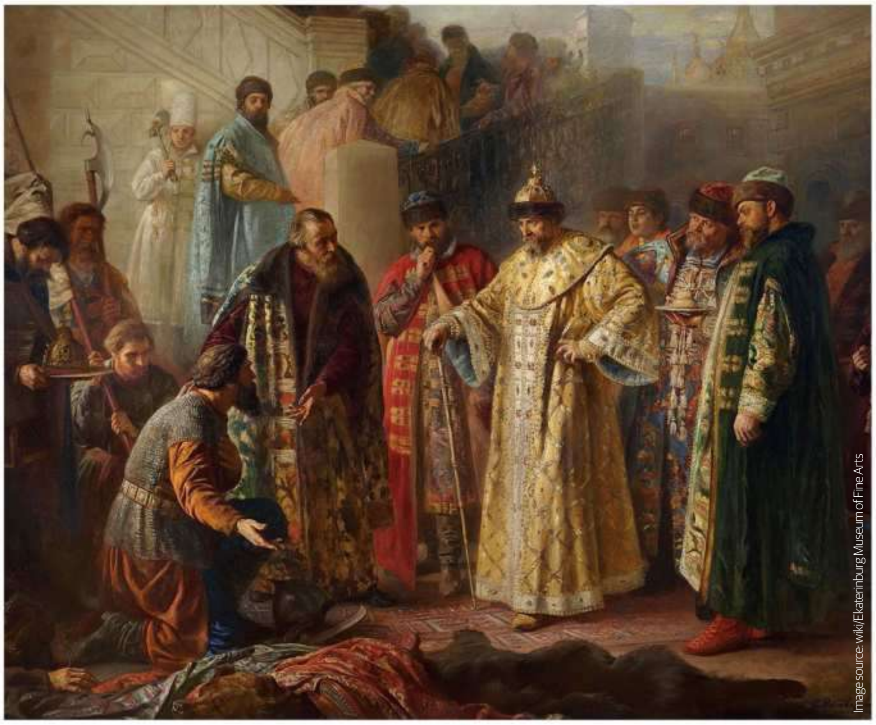


Image source: wiki/Ekaterinburg Museum of Fine Arts

ABOVE Many prominent courtiers were arrested then executed by the ruthless tyrant

1570
Ivan then targets members of his own court. Treasurer Nikita Funikov is boiled alive, Ivan Viskovaty (counselor) is hung and dismembered, and an unnamed boyar tied to a barrel of gunpowder which is then detonated.

Image source: wiki/v-himera.livejournal.com

1580
Maria Dolgorukaya, Ivan's seventh wife, is drowned the day after their wedding when he discovers she's not a virgin.

1581
Ivan beats his pregnant daughter-in-law for wearing immodest clothing.

1581
She miscarries and it's believed the severity of his beating caused this.

1581
Following this, he engages in a heated argument with his son, striking him with his staff and killing him.

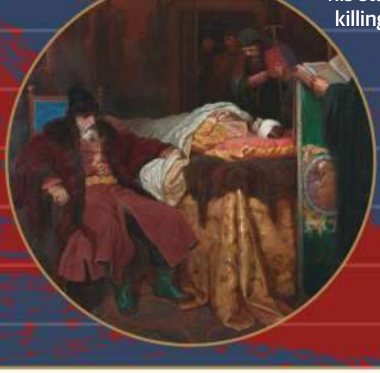


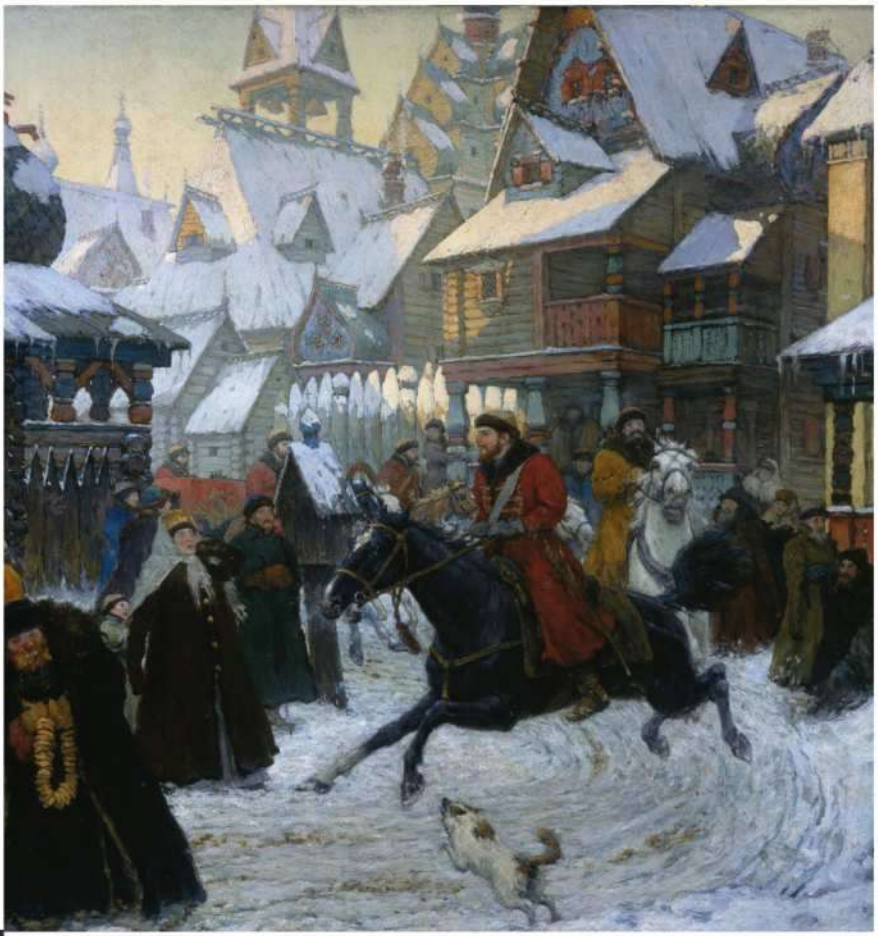
Image source: wiki/Tretyakov Gallery

THE OPRICHNINA AND THE REIGN OF TERROR

In December 1564 Ivan left Moscow with his family and announced that he had abdicated. He agreed to return only on condition that he divide the country into two parts. One of these, the zemshchina (the 'land') was to be administered by the boyars; the other, the oprichnina, would come directly under the tsar's own control. Within the oprichnina Ivan created his special bodyguard, the oprichniki, who in practice were allowed to terrorise the zemshchina. The greatest atrocity associated with the oprichnina occurred in 1570, when Ivan launched a punitive raid on the great trading city of Novgorod, in the north-west of Russia, accusing its inhabitants of plotting treason against him. After massacring the citizens and looting or destroying their property, the tsar returned to Moscow, where he held mass public executions of those accused of complicity in the treason of Novgorod. In 1571, taking advantage of the chaotic situation in Russia, the Crimean khan invaded from the south and burned much of Moscow. The following year the khan invaded again, but this time he was decisively defeated by Ivan's troops. Nevertheless, the tsar seems to have blamed the oprichniki for his humiliation in the previous year, and later in 1572 he abolished the oprichnina as suddenly as he had introduced it.

Historians are still puzzled by many aspects of the oprichnina. Some attribute it to madness on Ivan's part, although there is no evidence for a diagnosis of anything that modern psychiatrists would regard as mental illness. It seems most likely that Ivan had some obscure political purpose, to remove or prevent the formation of opposition to his rule by dividing the elite. By moving landholders from the zemshchina territory to that of the oprichnina, and vice versa, he weakened their base of support in their traditional localities. But contrary to the view of some historians, Ivan's terror was not directed exclusively, or even primarily, against the boyars – all sections of society suffered. It was mainly because of the reign of terror from 1565 to 1572 that scholars came to regard the epithet 'grozny', in the modern sense of 'terrible', as a justifiable description of the tsar. Surprisingly, Ivan's image in folklore is more positive. Perhaps because of the demagogic and populist elements in the rhetoric that the tsar directed against his victims, folksongs and folktales depict him as the champion of the ordinary people against their common enemies: 'traitor-boyars' and corrupt officials.

BELOW Ivan's oprichniki troops brutalised civilians he suspected of plotting against him



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IVAN'S LAST YEARS

After the abolition of the oprichnina, Ivan's rule became less blood-soaked, although his repressive policies and eccentric behaviour continued. His personal life was increasingly chaotic. After the death in 1569 of his second wife, the Circassian princess Maria Temryukovna, Ivan married again five more times, although the legitimacy of his later marriages was dubious. In 1581 Tsarevich Ivan Ivanovich, the elder of Ivan's two surviving sons from his first marriage, and the heir to the throne, died suddenly. According to rumours that are generally believed by historians, Tsarevich Ivan was accidentally killed by his father as the result of an angry quarrel. The tsar was consumed with grief and guilt, and donated vast sums of money to monasteries in remembrance of his son. He also had lists compiled of all those who had been put to death during his reign, and sent them to monasteries with further huge donations for the commemoration of their souls. Although they do not include all those who died, these lists provide historians with a major source of evidence for the identities and numbers (they refer to over 3,000 people) of the victims of Ivan's reign of terror.

> "Ivan's terror was not directed exclusively, or even primarily, against the boyars – all sections of society suffered"

The death of Tsarevich Ivan may have affected his father's health: certainly the tsar did not survive his son for long. On 18 March 1584 Ivan suddenly collapsed and died while playing chess with one of his courtiers. Rumours quickly spread that the tsar had been poisoned, but this seems to have been merely gossip.

IVAN'S LEGACY

Ivan was succeeded by his son Fedor, who was both physically and mentally feeble. Fedor's ambitious brother-in-law, the boyar Boris Godunov, acted as de facto regent, and when Fedor died in 1598 without leaving an heir, Boris became tsar. Boris's legitimacy was however always in doubt, especially since he was suspected of having ordered the murder, in 1591, of Tsar Ivan's youngest son, Tsarevich Dmitry of Uglich, who was then regarded as the most likely heir to the throne. In 1604 a man claiming to be Dmitry led an invading army from neighbouring Lithuania. This 'false Dmitry' seized the Russian throne in 1605, but was overthrown the following year. The period of civil war and

WHO WERE THE BOYARS?

The target of so much of Ivan's ire, but who were they?

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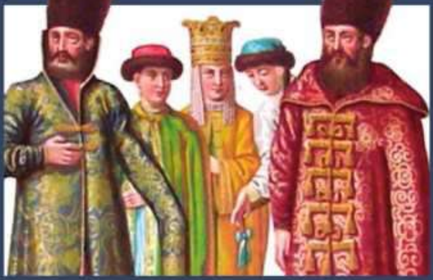
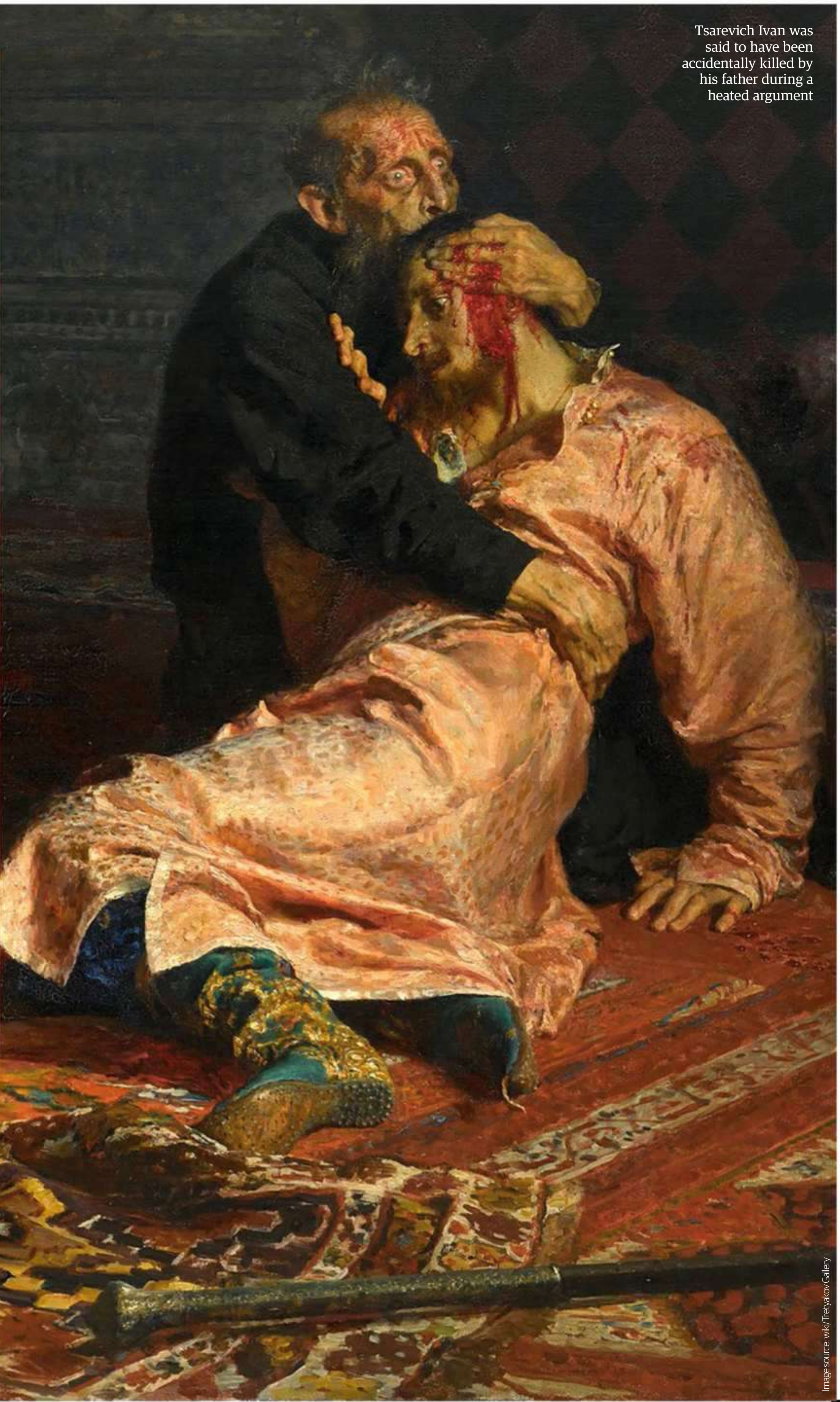


Image source: wiki/runiverse.ru

The highest rank of aristocracy in Bulgaria, Serbia, Wallachia, Moldavia, Romania, Livonia and Russia, the boyars were the most powerful and richest families of the region from the 10th to 17th centuries, save only for the princes who ruled. Because of their rank and status they often formed the advisory councils around the princes, but under Ivan III and Ivan IV that began to change as they looked to unify power under their own rule and select their own captains to manage principalities instead of the local land owners.

Perhaps as a result of these changes Russian folktales involving tsars and the boyars often paint the aristocratic families as manipulative and serving their own ends. As some of the oldest families the boyar class were also staunch defenders of traditional Russian values, such as upholding the prohibition on shaving. One later example of this was when Peter The Great returned from Europe he wanted to modernise Russian customs, and one of these was to encourage shaving. When the boyars protested he introduced a beard tax to force the issue.

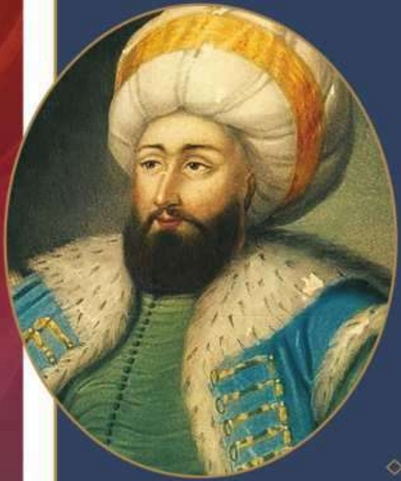


Tsarevich Ivan was said to have been accidentally killed by his father during a heated argument

Image source: wiki/Tretyakov Gallery

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Exploring the popularity of the title 'caesar'



KAYSER-I RÛM *Ottoman Empire*

While the title of caesar had been adopted and handed down among the Roman emperors since Julius Caesar, any claim to the title of Emperor of Rome had become tenuous after the fall of the Byzantine Empire. However, when Mehmed II captured Constantinople (the former capital of the Byzantines and the 'second Rome') he adopted the title 'Caesar of the Romans', claiming a direct line of power to that old empire.

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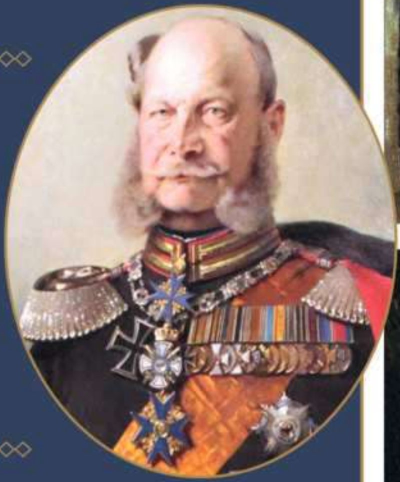

KAISER *Germany*

Beginning with the Holy Roman Emperors and adopted by the Habsburgs from 1804, the term Kaiser was used in combination with King of the Romans, as approved by the pope in Rome. The claim was that the title proved some degree of heritage and authority derived from the Roman Empire itself, although that's less clear in the Habsburgs' use of it.

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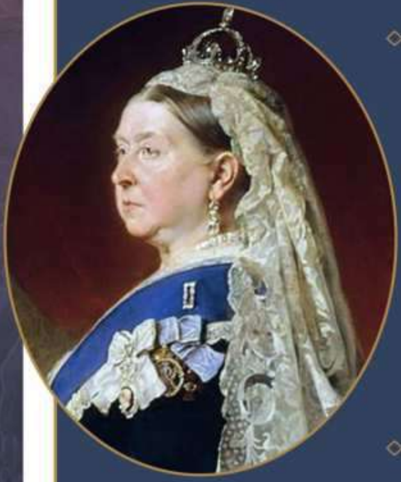

KAISAR-I-HIND *British Raj*

This was the Urdu version of the title of Emperor of India used by British monarchs during the British Raj, and originated with Queen Victoria wishing to be proclaimed Empress of India. The title Kaisar-i-Hind was created by GW Leitner, an orientalist, in 1876, but was simply used to mean emperor rather than claiming any Roman lineage.

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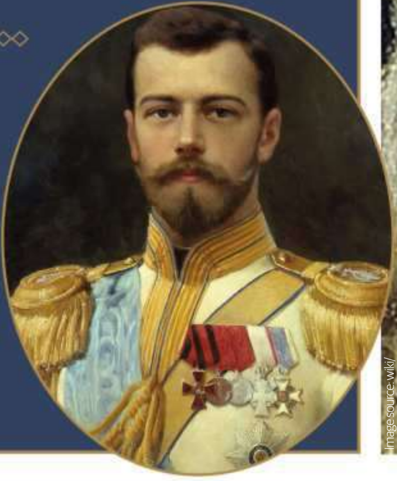


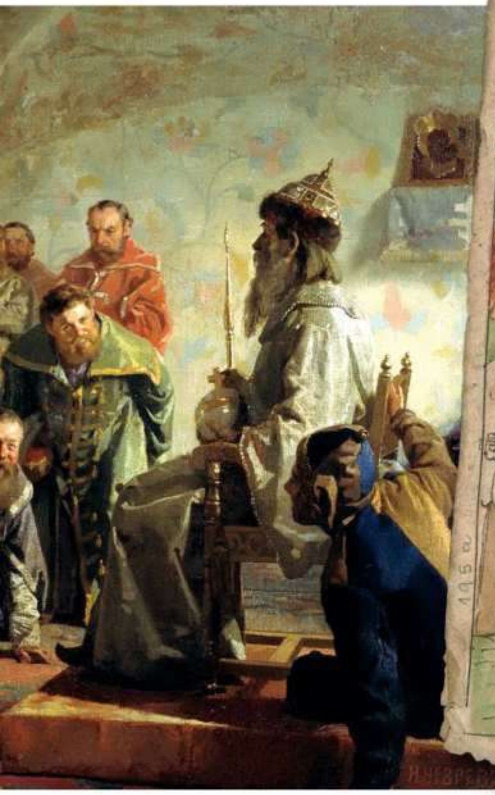
TSAR *Russia*

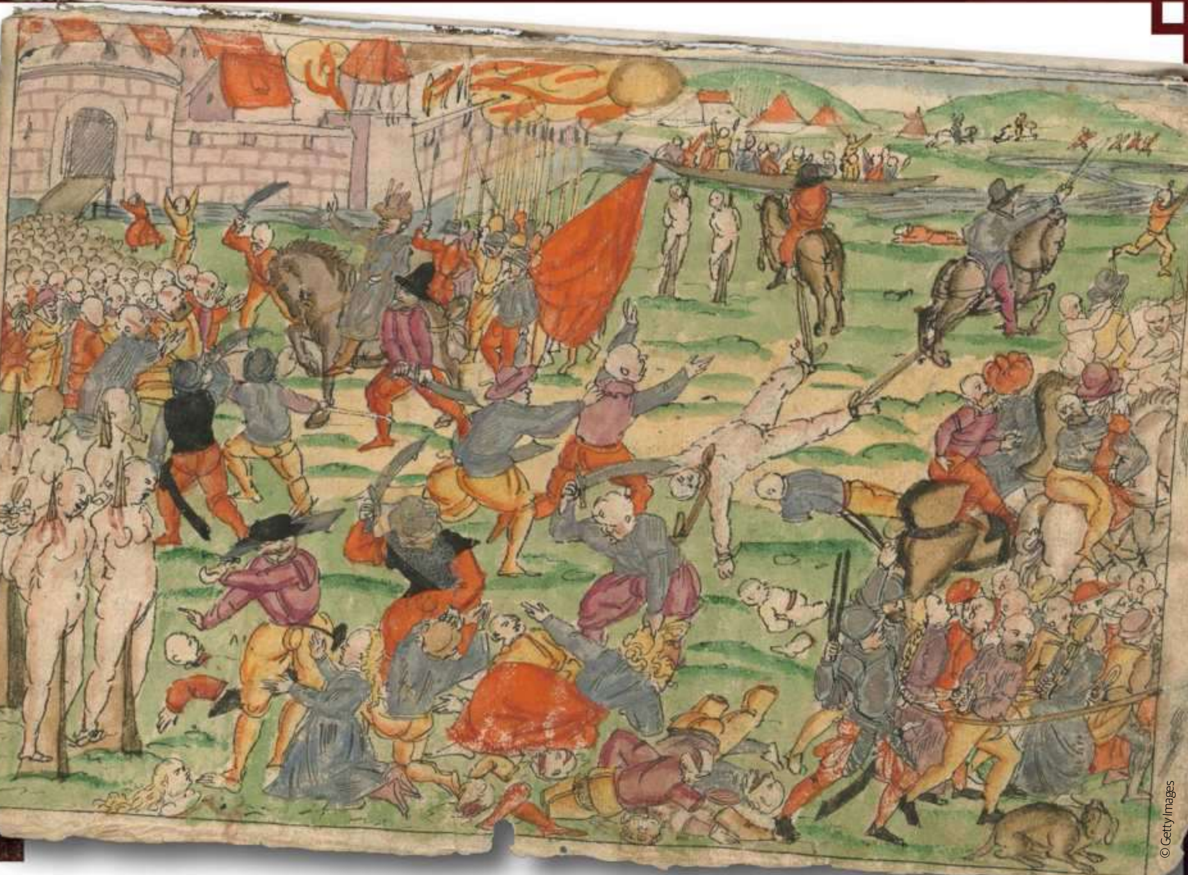
Beginning in the 15th century, a political movement emerged that wanted to claim Moscow as the 'third Rome'. With Constantinople being the second Rome as capital to the Byzantine Empire, some believed the Grand Duchy of Moscow should be the new spiritual successor to that lineage. In taking the title Tsar, Ivan IV was endorsing that claim.

Image sources: wiki/Konstantin Kapıdağlı, wiki/Deutsches Historisches Museum Berlin, wiki/The Royal Collection, wiki/Ilya Savich Galkin

Image source: wiki/Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts

Image source: wiki/ Tretyakov Gallery





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ABOVE Ivan's forces committed atrocities against civilians in Livonia in 1577

ABOVE-LEFT The infamous ruler was renowned for showing his defeated enemies no mercy

LEFT Ivan The Terrible was idolised by Stalin as a brutal role model

foreign intervention that ensued became known as the 'Time of Troubles'. It came to an end only in 1613, when Michael Romanov, the great-nephew of Ivan's first wife, Anastasia, was elected as tsar. Michael was the founder of the new Romanov dynasty that ruled Russia until the revolution of February 1917.

Tsar Michael succeeded to a realm that was largely devastated by the upheavals of the Time of Troubles. Nevertheless, the basic administrative infrastructure that had been created by Ivan's reforms in the mid-16th century provided a basis for recovery. Territorial expansion continued in Siberia, and Russians reached the Pacific Ocean in 1639. Under Michael's son, Alexis (r. 1645-76), Russia regained much of the western territory that had been lost in the later stages of the Livonian War, and expanded to annex the eastern Ukrainian lands, including the city of Kiev, from Poland-Lithuania. Alexis's son Peter ('the Great') continued with successful military action in the west, famously establishing a Russian presence on the Baltic coast, where he built his new capital, St Petersburg, in 1703. As a result of his victory over Sweden in the Great Northern War in 1721, Peter took the title of 'emperor' in addition to 'tsar', using the Latin term imperator to stress the Russian rulers' claim of continuity with the Roman empire (St Petersburg, like Rome, was the 'city of St Peter').

> "Over 400 years later Ivan is still seen by some as the archetype of a Russian ruler"

Peter's orientation towards the West meant that many Russian officials in the 18th and 19th centuries looked back at Ivan's Muscovy as backward and barbaric. Some intellectual critics of the tsarist regime, however, who wanted to see Russia become a constitutional monarchy – or even a republic – felt that the system had not changed so much since the 16th century, and that Peter and his successors, such as Nicholas I (r. 1825-55) and Alexander III (r. 1881-94), were just as tyrannical and oppressive as Ivan had been. A negative image of Ivan (and of most other tsars) was also put forward by historians in the first years of Soviet power after 1917.

A surprising change took place, however, under Joseph Stalin. During World War II, Ivan's attempts to gain access to the Baltic Sea in the Livonian War provided propagandists with a heroic precedent for Stalin's efforts to annex the Baltic states that had gained independence from the Russian Empire after the revolutions of 1917. But the Soviet leader also favoured a positive image of the oprichnina, as a 'progressive' force that was dedicated to the eradication of treason. Stalin held a highly favourable view of Ivan: his only criticism was that the tsar was not sufficiently ruthless in his persecution of the boyars, and wasted too much time repenting and praying for the forgiveness of his sins. Stalin clearly saw Ivan as a role model, but was determined that he himself would not make the mistake of being too soft on traitors.

After Stalin's death in 1953, Soviet attitudes towards Ivan became more negative, and Stalin himself was criticised for having turned the 'terrible tsar' into a Russian national hero. Partly because of his self-identification with Ivan, Stalin has been described as a 'red tsar', and the term 'tsar' has also been used – in a negative sense – for subsequent Russian leaders, such as Vladimir Putin, by their critics who regard them as autocratic and authoritarian. More than 400 years after Ivan was crowned as the first tsar, he is still seen by some as the archetype of a Russian ruler, although none of his successors (apart from Stalin) went as far as he did, during the period of the oprichnina, in using mass terror as a political weapon. It is surely somewhat ironic that the title of 'tsar', which evoked so many connotations of the glory of imperial Rome and Byzantium at the time of Ivan's coronation, should have ended up implying simply a 'tyrant' or a 'despot'. ○

PARIS’ THEATRE OF TERROR

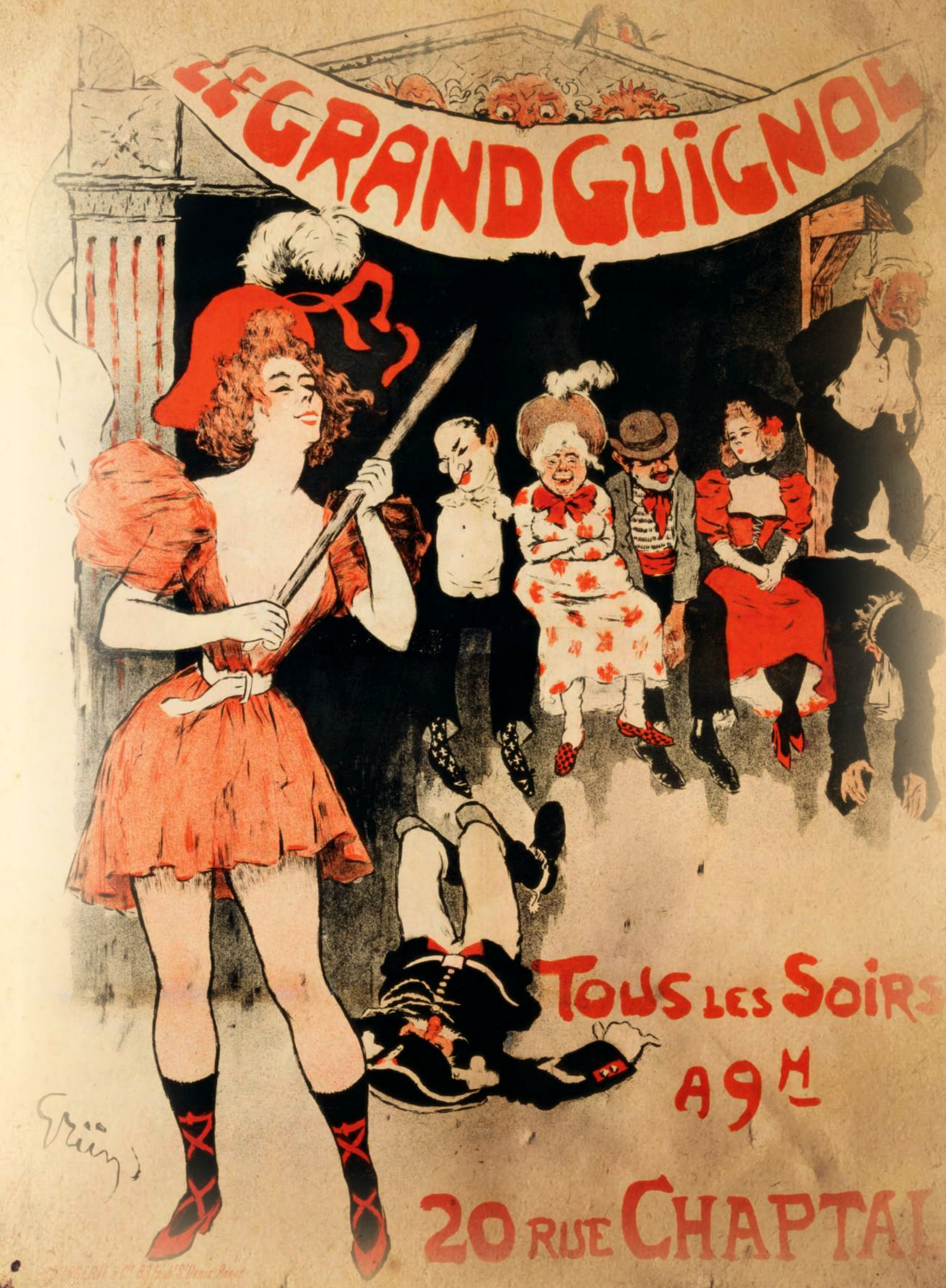
Inside the Parisian theatre that shocked and horrified audiences for over 60 years

Written by Callum McKelvie

Paris. The early 1900s in the Pigalle district, an area known for its many bars and 'adult entertainments', later nicknamed 'Pig Alley' by visiting troops at the end of World War II. As night falls we venture down dark alleys and seedy side streets, making our way nervously to an evening like no other. We find ourselves at a door where devilish gargoyles grin menacingly down at us. Not the result of some perverse sense of humour, in fact the building was once a chapel, though now its stone guardians serve only to increase the nerves of the waiting customers. Taking our seats, we chat excitedly before the curtain is raised and a series of tales containing sexual titillation, shocking violence, madness and mutilation are played out before us. For this is a theatre like no other, this is the Grand Guignol.

From 1897 until its closure in 1962, the Grand Guignol became a legendary part of Parisian culture. Offering its own unique brand of entertainment, this infamous theatre laid the groundwork for much of contemporary horror media. Each night it would present a selection of short plays that were revolutionary in their approach to violence, psychology and darker subject matters. Among those who enjoyed the nocturnal pleasures this house of horrors had to offer were a young Ho Chi Minh (working in Paris as a pastry chef), Anaïs Nin and King Carol of Romania.

The name Grand Guignol translates as 'Big Puppet' and, as Mel Gordon suggests in his book *The Theatre Of Fear And Horror*, it reveals the intention of the plays at their core - to make adults laugh, cry and scream as if they were children. Initially, however, the word was meant to refer to the lead character ▶


LE GRAND GUIGNOL
TOUS LES SOIRS
A 9H
20 RUE CHAPTAL
Grün
Bourgerie & Cie 83 Faubg St Denis Paris

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Guignol from a popular puppet show that contained strong political undertones. Horror may have been how the theatre made its name, but it was not how it started under the direction of the Grand Guignol's founder, Oscar Méténier, who had somewhat loftier ambitions. Opening with an adaptation of Guy de Maupassant's *Mademoiselle Fifi*, Méténier focussed on plays of extreme social realism, highlighting working class issues in naturalistic stagings. With its tiny 20ft by 20ft stage, it was the perfect place to depict the horrors of real life. The choice of naming the theatre after a character who was entertaining but satirical was a pointed one and a firm statement of Méténier's intent.

But just four seasons later in 1898 Méténier chose to relinquish control and step down from his position as director. The pressure of keeping the theatre socially relevant night after night was proving a little too much and the novelty wearing a little thin. It was at this point, when the theatre could have simply vanished into obscurity, that perhaps the biggest influence in the Grand Guignol's lifetime took control. More than any other director, it was 32-year-old Max Maurey who shaped the Grand Guignol into the gruesome house of horror that became recognised the world over. Under his reign, the emphasis shifted to plays of gore, shock and scandal. Méténier had received considerable attention for a number of productions that defied the censors and dared to focus on 'less desirable' characters, such as prostitutes and criminals. Maurey took this and ditched the social realism, focussing instead on the sensation.

Maurey was an outsider in the world of the theatre. He was unknown in actors' and directors' circles and had virtually no artistic background to speak of. However, he did possess a talent that was invaluable in these times of heightened theatricality: a shrewd sense of showmanship. Maurey recognised that there was an appetite for material that pushed the boundaries of what was accepted and focussed on terror. And he saw in the Grand Guignol an

> "Maurey recognised there was an appetite for material that pushed the boundaries"

GRAND GUIGNOL

ABOVE Patrons walking to the theatre

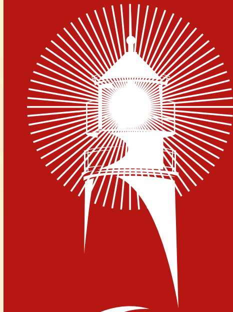
Tales of Terror

Five of the most famous and frightening plays that were performed at the Grand Guignol

The Laboratory of Hallucinations

By André de Lorde (1916)

The wife of Dr Gorlitz, a mad surgeon, tries to flee her husband. However, Gorlitz operates on her lover, putting him in a zombie-like state. At the climax, he overpowers the doctor and begins to operate on him.



The Lighthouse Keepers

By Pierre Antier and P Cloquemin (1918)

Two lighthouse keepers, father and son, begin their duty on a small island. However, the son has contracted rabies and soon the father is forced to fight for his life as a vicious storm descends on their remote outpost.

The Man of the Night

By André de Lorde and Leo Marches (1921)

An artist develops a strange obsession with death. He enjoys digging up corpses under the cover of darkness and mutilating them, and this becomes the gruesome secret of his impressively realistic paintings.

The Masks

By Charles Méré (1922)

A young couple attend a masked carnival. However, the girl becomes distraught when her lover doesn't show. Meanwhile, the boy's father is drinking with four masked revellers, but one seems oddly quiet, lying limply in a chair...

The Man Who Killed Death

By René Berton (1928)

A scientist revives the decapitated head of a man guillotined for murder. His attorney, still unsure of the man's innocence, asks the head if it was guilty. The head continuously screams "No!" as the attorney is driven insane.

5x © Getty Images

LEFT Elaborate staging for a sequence involving an acid bath

BELOW André de Lorde, the 'Prince of Terror' and principal playwright for the Grand Guignol

BOTTOM A gory sequence from *A Kiss In The Night*

opportunity to make money – a lot of money. Legend tells that he would measure the success of a play by the number of patrons who fainted during its performance, and he even hired a doctor to treat audience members for whom the shock was 'too much'.

More than anything else, however, it was the plays that drew the crowds, and Maurey's approach to scripts was meticulous in the extreme. He's said to have constantly rewritten scripts and created a standard template for each evening, known as a system of 'hot and cold showers'. This meant alternating a horrific or gory play with a comedy – usually of the bawdy variety. This helped increase the theatre's reputation as not only a house of horror but of loose morals as well.

Many of France's playwrights would write for the Grand Guignol (including Gaston Leroux, author of *The Phantom Of The Opera*, who contributed *The Man Who Saw The Devil* in 1911) but it was André de Lorde who was to have a profound influence on it. Having had a preoccupation with death since childhood, De Lorde often worked on plays with his psychiatrist, Alfred Binet, co-creator of the Binet-Simon IQ test. De Lorde would write over 100 plays for the theatre between 1901 and 1926, leading to some of the most famous and controversial Guignol plays produced. In 1921 his *L'Homme De La Nuit* (The Man Of The Night) told the dark tale of a necrophiliac and appears to have been based on the real crimes of Sgt Bertrand. *The System Of Dr Goudron And Professor Fether* (1903) is an adaptation of an Edgar Allen Poe story about an asylum taken over by the criminally insane. These plays were incredibly daring for the time, breaking taboos and focussing on subject matters that even today would be considered difficult and upsetting. This worked to raise the profile of the Grand Guignol, making celebrities of their cast and crew. Lorde himself became known as 'The Prince Of Terror' and would be eternally associated with the theatre whose style he helped perfect.

After 16 successful years, Maurey retired. He had transformed the theatre into one of the biggest attractions in Paris and pushed numerous boundaries. Needless to say, his successor Camille Choisy had large shoes to fill. Choisy was perhaps initially an odd choice, having primarily worked as an actor. However, he had spent much of his career performing in theatres throughout Paris, developing an in-depth knowledge of stagecraft. Director of the theatre from 1914-1930, Choisy used this experience ▶

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PANDEMICOLLECTIVE

THE TERROR LIVES ON!

Rhea Amos, managing director of Colorado's Pandemic Collective, tells us how they keep the Grand Guignol spirit alive

What is the Pandemic Collective?
We're a non-profit theatre organisation founded in 2014. Our mission statement is to 'infect the masses with horror theatre in the hopes of rousing social change', so we do a lot of socially conscious pieces. We also like to utilise artists outside of the theatre, and have worked with drag queens, live sand artists and musicians.

You performed your first 'A Night Of Grand Guignol' in 2016, what drew you to this material?
We received a book of Grand Guignol as a gift and we poured through it immediately. We discovered that we loved the concept of Grand Guignol and short vignette pieces of stylised horror theatre. Our performance was actually by two local playwrights who wrote original scripts, and because traditionally Grand Guignol can feature music or dance we were also really keen to include this. So we have a musician or band underscore the plays and perform a mini set during the intermission.

You've utilised both original scripts and vintage scripts – how do you go about the script selection process?
We've used a pretty even number of plays devised by local playwrights and then scripts from the Parisian Grand Guignol canon. We receive submissions all year of original scripts by playwrights, which is really incredible. From there we put aside scripts that speak to us and pair them based on common themes or imagery. So we've had presentations based on twisted love, revenge and the ocean. So that's the method of our madness!

2x © Mindy Delmez **Logo:** Kaylee Littleton

The Grand Guignol was known for its gore and shocking violence. Can you tell us about some of the effects you've used in past performances?
So in our last season we performed a classic script called *Chop Chop*. This required a full-sized guillotine, which we rigged with a blade that fell at the pull of a lever. Talk about the air going out of a room! When that blade dropped, it was a completely dazzling and horrifying effect to watch it fall 15ft. We also had an actor cut a piece of prosthetic skin from her arm and we rigged a blood pack underneath it so it dripped down her arm. This was done literally feet away from the audience, so that was one of our big creepy-crawly moments. We've also given audience members rain ponchos and had boxes of blood and dismembered limbs fall on them. They were covered in blood and had to go out and drive home, so we're complete monsters! We've had slit throats, waterfalls of blood and acid attacks, and creating those nightmare-inducing effects is such an exciting part of producing Grand Guignol.

Why do you think the Grand Guignol is still performed all over the world?
To me there's an antiquity about Grand Guignol that you can see in incredible paintings or pieces of art. There's a reverence and a charm, a notion that most of these pieces were conceptualised 100 years ago yet are still relevant and still so shocking. It speaks to a nature in us that I think we all have, a propensity for the adoration of horror media, telling spooky stories around a campfire or going to haunted houses. The fact that people can confront their greatest fears, head on, whether through laughter or terror or something in between. It's such an honour to bring these plays to life and I think that the companies that still produce Grand Guignol have a really great responsibility to do them justice.

IMP. 26 R. PHILIPPE-DE-GIRARD PARIS

to push the Grand Guignol towards more elaborate staging and special effects. While the text was still integral and core to the Grand Guignol style, suddenly more stylised sets and lighting were being employed. Choisy even supposedly once bought a fully functional operating theatre as the set for a new play. He also rarely edited the text of the plays, usually only doing so following audience response, allowing him to retain the services of playwrights far longer than his predecessor.

The argument had been made that the Grand Guignol might seem tame post-WWI compared to the horrors that had been unleashed upon the world between 1914 and 1918, yet this didn't appear to worry Choisy. Whereas swords, daggers and strangulation had been the order of the day pre-war, Choisy now encouraged his writers to let their imaginations run wild when it came to scenes of death and destruction. During his productions characters were dissolved in acid, electrocuted, blown up and even eaten by Pumas. These effects involved a vast array of complex trickery and audiences delighted in this new angle to the theatre, attempting to 'spot the illusion'. However, these more elaborate methods of murder forced the staging to finally move away from an emphasis on naturalism and realism. It was during this era that the heightened sense of reality which had constantly been threatening to develop in the performances was finally allowed to come to the forefront and the Grand Guignol became a style all of its own.

RIGHT Excited customers waiting for the show to begin

RIGHT-INSET Max Maurey, the director who turned the theatre into a house of horror

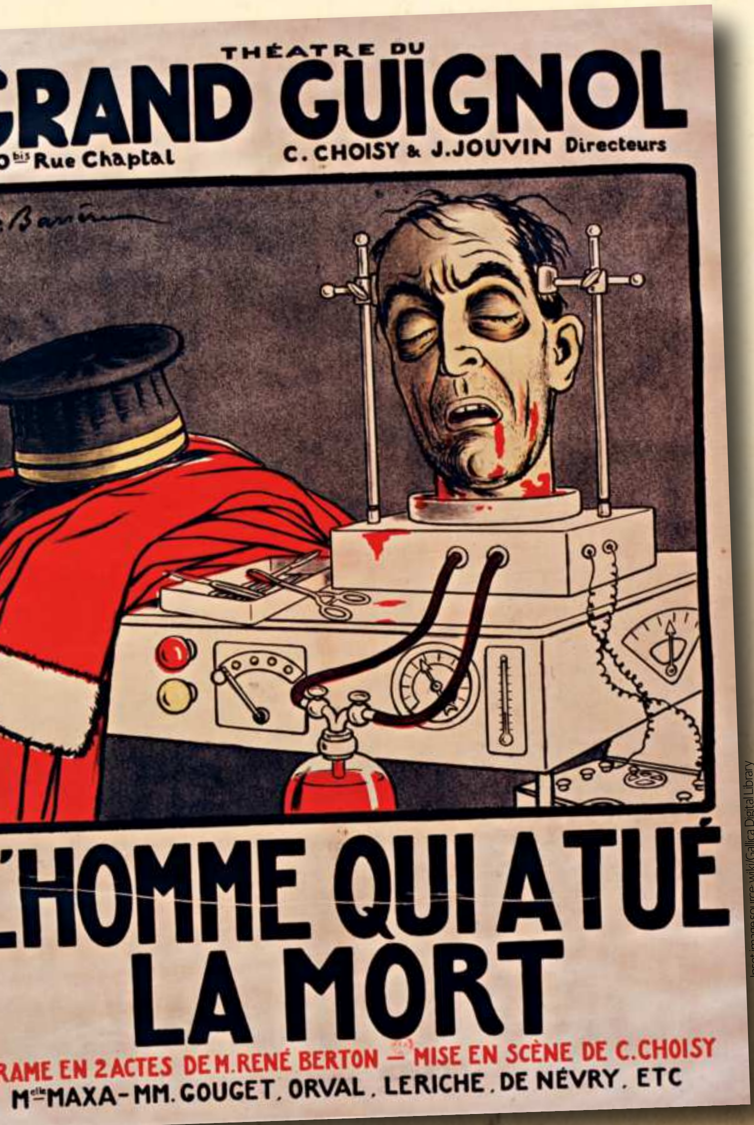
© Getty Images   Inset image source: wiki/Gallica Digital Library

Perhaps his most publicised addition, however, was the hiring of actress Paula Maxa, known simply as Maxa, and nicknamed 'the most assassinated woman in the world'. She became known primarily for her victim roles and was reputedly killed on stage some 10,000 times in at least 60 different ways. Even today, her fame lives on and in 2018 Netflix produced *The Most Assassinated Woman In The World*, a biopic that centred on Maxa's life at the Grand Guignol. The combined talents of Choisy, Maxa and De Lorde led to what many termed the 'Golden Age of Guignol'.

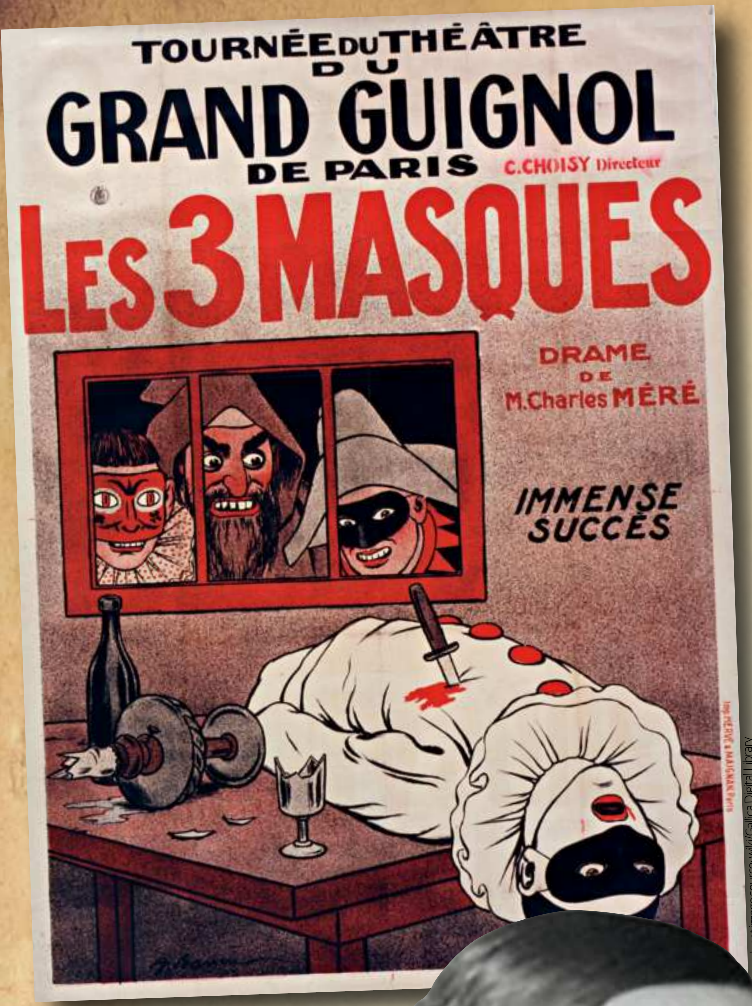
"Characters were dissolved in acid, electrocuted and blown up"

It's at this point that we really should let ourselves get gruesome and grisly. We do hope you're not squeamish! The theatre was known for a heavy emphasis on gore and the effects of the Grand Guignol became legendary among the many 'Guignolers' who attended in droves. So much so that a number of the theatre's 'trade secrets' were patented to keep the illusions a secret. Legend has it that the theatre's last director, Charles Nonon, personally mixed nine different shades of blood every day. This formula was apparently so realistic that it would 'scab' if not kept warm, and audiences could occasionally hear a cry of: "Quick, Edmond! Warm up the blood!" Gloves filled with glue water were used for sequences where hands were chopped off, edible eyeballs were made by a local confectioner, and rubber hoses soaked in blood made excellent intestines.

With all that blood and violence it's no wonder that some patrons found it all a bit too much. However, not everybody reacted in the same way and there are numerous stories about how audiences 'responded' to the gruesome acts played out before them. At the back of the theatre were several private boxes fronted with grills that allowed those inside to see out, but no one to see in. During performances, some patrons took advantage of this newfound privacy to the point that mid-performance actors were known to shout: "Have you finished?" Considering that many seats were found 'stained', one has to pity the cleaning staff.


THÉATRE DU
GRAND GUIGNOL
bis Rue Chaptal
C. CHOISY & J. JOUVIN Directeurs
HOMME QUI A TUÉ
LA MORT
RAME EN 2 ACTES DE M. RENÉ BERTON — MISE EN SCÈNE DE C. CHOISY
Mlle MAXA - MM. GOUGET, ORVAL, LERICHE, DE NÉVRY, ETC

Inset image source: wiki/Gallica Digital Library



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Yet, so soon after the theatre's heyday, its downfall began. Much of the blame for this sudden turn of events has been placed on Jack Jouvin, who served as director from 1930 to 1937. Jouvin, who had obtained influence in the theatre through shares, clearly had his own vision for the theatre and regularly butted heads with Choisy. After several unhappy years working together, Choisy left and set up a rival company – though this would not prove to be a success. Jouvin then targeted Maxa and fired her, supposedly as he felt she was stealing too much of the limelight. Jouvin used very few of De Lorde's scripts and shifted the focus away from physical violence, instead crafting more psychological suspense dramas with sexual undertones than plays of extreme horror. A large number of these were written by Jouvin himself, but despite his best efforts it was all to no avail. Audiences began to wane and aside from American troops and students, it received very little attention.

Following Jouvin, it seemed like there might still have been some life left in the theatre. Eva Berkson, Jouvin's successor, was able to coax Maxa back, as well as introduce a seemingly winning formula of bawdy humour and contemporary horror plays. However, as Nazi forces invaded France, Berkson had no choice but to flee to Britain, where she joined the auxiliary RAF. Meanwhile, Choisy returned to the Grand Guignol and kept the theatre running during the Nazi occupation. It remained popular during the war, mainly among the occupying forces. Indeed, Hermann Göring was known to enjoy the shows, despite the theatre's performances being a prime example of so-called 'degenerate art'.

After the war, the theatre continued to put on shows. Choisy passed away shortly after the conflict ended but Berkson, along with her husband, was able to return and recommence management. Despite continuing for another 17 years, most histories of the Guignol in this period depict the theatre as having fallen from grace, limping steadily along but never quite reaching the heights of its earlier glory years. The

Inset image source: wiki/Theatre Magazine Company, Vandamm Studio, photographer

NOËL COWARD AND THE BRITISH GRAND GUIGNOL

It wasn't just the French who had all the fun

In 1926 the Grand Guignol came to London, and for a two-year period José Levy's version battled against censors and featured the talents of Sybil Thorndyke and Noël Coward. Coward's satirical one-act comedy, *The Better Half*, focussed on the sexual politics in an unhappy marriage. Despite Coward's towering presence in the British theatre, this long-lost work was forgotten until Richard Hand and Mike Wilson rediscovered it when researching the Grand Guignol in 2007.

Inset image source: wiki/Gallica Digital Library

US N'AVEZ PAS PEU
ALLEZ VOIR
LA TUEUSE

FAR-LEFT Having fun behind the scenes with actor in gruesome makeup

LEFT Vintage posters put up for sale at the theatre's closure in 1962

BOTTOM Peter Cushing as Baron Frankenstein, in one of the Hammer films inspired by the Grand Guignol

theatre would have several directors in this period, though none seemed able to recapture the earlier magic. Between 1954 and 1958, feminist crime writer Raymonde Machard used a selection of younger contemporary writers in an attempt to 'modernise' a form that had become increasingly old fashioned and dated. Yet as the 'X' certificate began to be exploited in British cinemas and horror films became increasingly violent and graphic, it seemed the writing was on the wall.

In 1962, after terrifying audiences for decades, the theatre would finally close its doors. Musing on its demise, the Grand Guignol's last director Charles Nonon famously declared: "We could never compete with Buchenwald. Before the war, everyone believed that what happened on stage was purely imaginary; now we know that these things - and worse - are possible." Indeed, the case has been made several times that the theatre simply struggled to compete with the horrors of real life and that World War II cast a long shadow over its future. The building itself still exists and is now occupied by the International Visual Theatre, a company devoted to performing plays in sign language.

"The Guignol influence can be seen in the *Saw* movies of the early 2000s"

Yet, like all good horror monsters, it appears you just can't kill Grand Guignol. Indeed, while the rise of cinema is often blamed for its closure, horror movies as we know them owe the theatre a huge debt. In the silent-movie era, several Grand Guignol plays were adapted for the screen, such as *The Lighthouse Keepers* (1929) and this continued into the 1930s with *The Obsession* (1933). Later 'talkies' even incorporated the theatre into their plots. The 1935 film *Mad Love* follows Peter Lorre as mad surgeon Dr Gogol who obsesses over the lead actress in a Grand Guignol-esque troupe. *Mad Love* was not alone, either. From 1933's *Mystery Of The Wax Museum*, in which Lionel Atwill's disfigured villain dips his victims in wax, to the sadistic killer in *Murders In The Zoo* (1933), the Guignol style is all over early Hollywood horror.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, as the Guignol theatre lay dying, Britain's Hammer films were reviving the horror genre with full-colour adaptations of gothic classics - only with added dashings of sex and so called 'Kensington gore'. Its series of Frankenstein films starring Peter Cushing focussed on brain transplants and surgical horrors, while presenting their villainous lead as charming and endearing. *The Revenge Of Frankenstein* (1958) seems to draw particular influence in style and features sequences of guillotining and a man becoming a monster after brain surgery. The Guignol influence can also be seen in the slasher films of the 1980s and the *Saw* movies of the early 2000s.

And yet, while its influence may be felt throughout the horror film genre, the Grand Guignol is, at its heart, pure theatre. And like all theatre, it is ephemeral, never to be seen again - but this only adds to its mystique. The stills, posters and scripts give a tantalizing look into a lost world. But even so, while very little remains of the original Grand Guignol, its name is now used to define a style and genre all of its own. Troupes around the world still perform in 'Grand Guignol' plays, using the scripts of de Lorde and others in an attempt to replicate the feel and frights of the infamous Parisian theatre. It goes to show, just when you think the monster's dead - it rises again.

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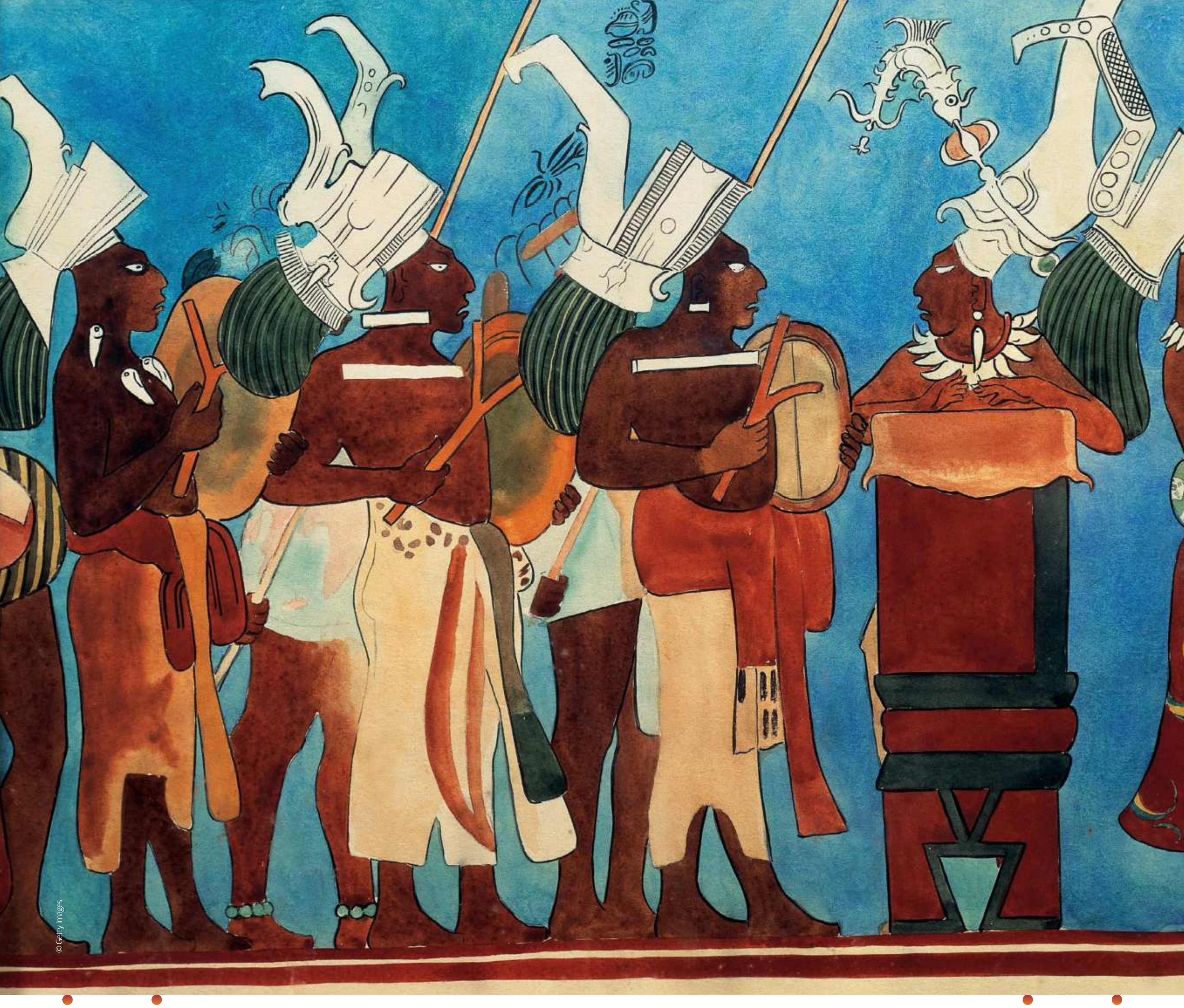
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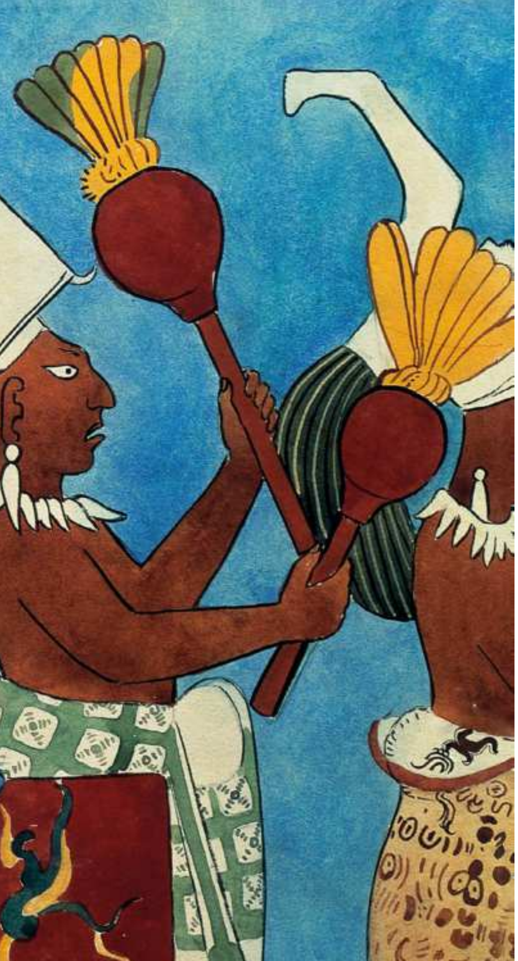
DAILY LIFE FOR THE MAYA

Life in the Maya civilisation revolved around the key values of strong family bonds, hard work and community

Written by Frances White



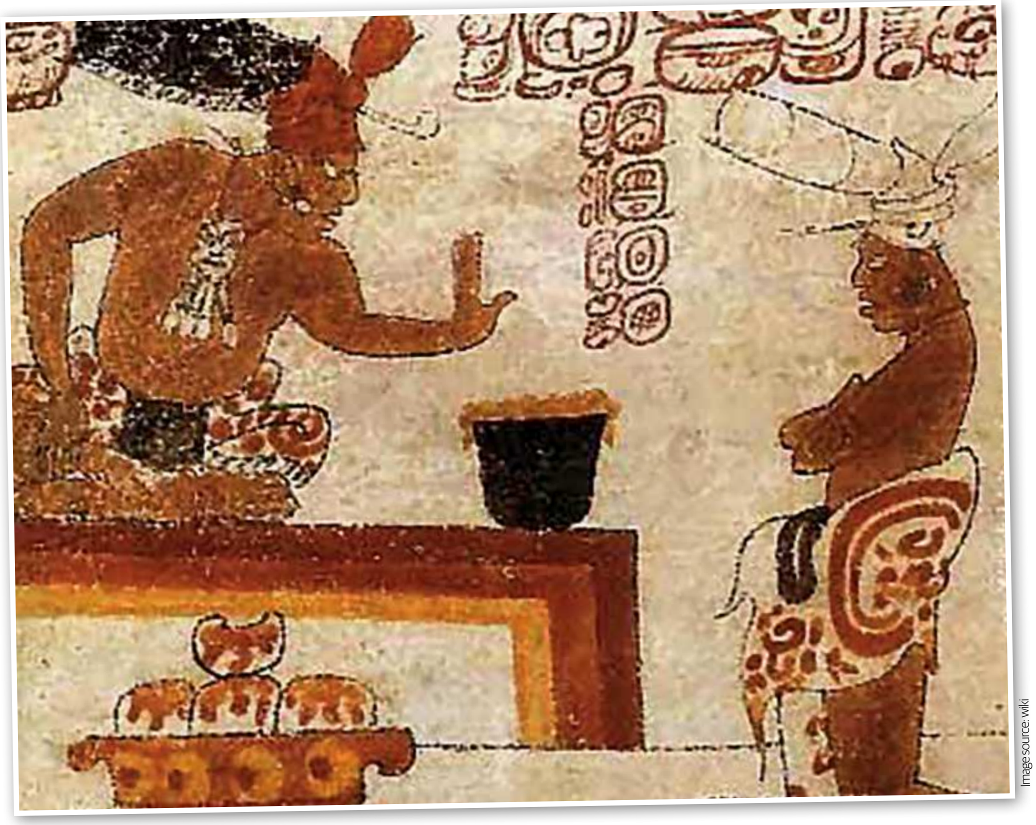


Image source: wiki

Image source: wiki/ Brooklyn Museum

Society in the Maya civilisation formed a pyramid. At the base sat commoners, forming a crucial foundation for all above them – artisans, traders, nobles and leaders. Someone's place on this pyramid not only determined their place in society, but every aspect of their lives – from jobs and clothing to food and housing. While the nobles and leaders lived in large palaces made of stone, commoners resided in mud huts on the edge of the city, in single rooms designed to house the entire family, including aunts, uncles and grandparents. Commoners would even be buried beneath the floor of the same house they had lived in for their entire lives.

JOBS

For Maya commoners, the most common occupation was farming. Maya society relied on its farmers not only for sustenance, but also for trading. Farming was incredibly hard work, as the Maya didn't use metal tools or beasts of burden to help them. All the work was done by simple stone tools or by hand. In order to combat this, Maya farmers used ingenious techniques to help feed their large populations. For example, the three main crops of maize, beans and squash were grown together, as each provided support for the others. They would also use slash-and-burn agriculture, where they would burn an entire area and plant in the rich ash. But not all commoners were farmers; they also worked as porters, limestone quarriers and servants to nobles. The nobles would usually fulfil the more revered roles of priests, government officials, scribes or military leaders. Maya believed that noble heritage was passed down in blood, and that this gave the nobles a stronger link to the gods than the common people. This belief made rising up the social hierarchy nigh-on impossible for commoners.

Another key role in Maya society was the artisan class. They were employed to create beautiful works of art for the nobles to enjoy. Although they were still regarded as commoners, they managed to avoid the hard physical labour in the fields and instead spent their days making jewellery, pottery and headdresses. This was often a family trade, and every member of the family would be involved in creating the goods that maintained their livelihood.

CLOTHING

Clothing was very much dictated by social class. Commoners were prohibited from wearing the same clothes as nobles. Commoners' clothes would be suited for hard physical labour, comprising of simple garments – loincloths for the men, and blouses and long skirts for women. Both wore a cape-like blanket called a mantra to protect them if it was cold.

The wealthy wore colourful clothes, feathers and elaborate jewellery crafted by master artisans. Embroidery, animal skins, furs and precious stones were all used to make a noble's clothing stand out. Hats showed high social standing literally, as the higher the hat the better. Some hats were known to be even taller than the person wearing them.

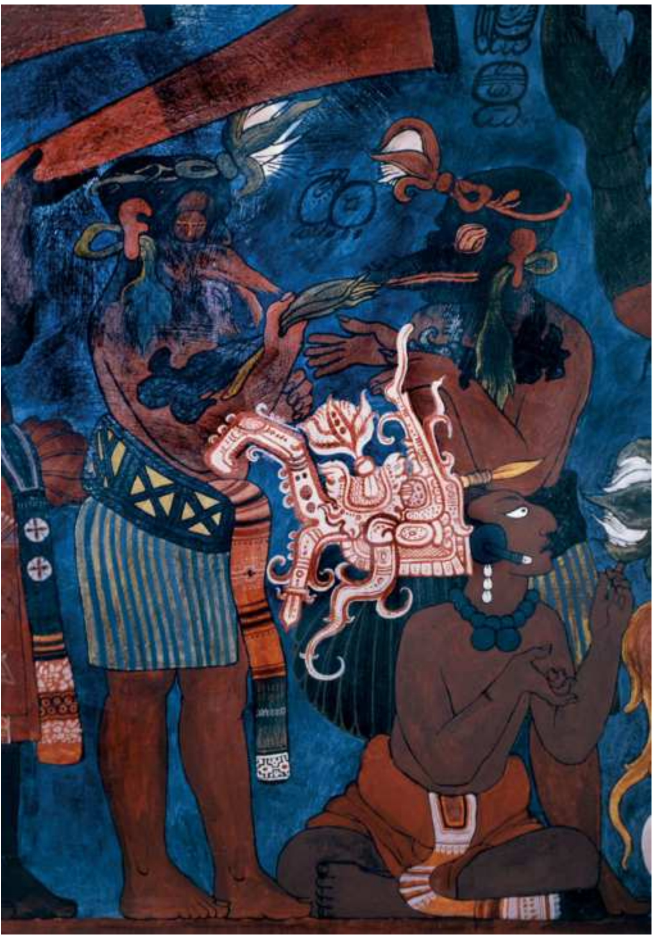
Jewellery was a major aspect of Mayan fashion, and those who could afford it

▶

ABOVE-LEFT The murals at Bonampak show some of the courtly customs of the Maya in fantastic detail

ABOVE-RIGHT In this artwork, a noble forbids a man from touching a container of chocolate

RIGHT Chocolate became such a crucial aspect of Maya society that it was woven into the creation myth



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TOP Maya cuisine continues to be served in regions of Central America, especially at social events

ABOVE This fresco from the temple of Bonampak was only accessible to the elite members of the Maya community

would decorate their entire bodies with jewels. The rich wore earrings, nose rings, necklaces and pins that were made out of gold, silver and gemstones, while the poor would wear the same but made out of bones, clay or even sticks. The most popular stone was jade, thought to represent life and growth. Tattoos were also popular, as the Maya believed that any body modification demonstrated their high social status to the gods.

Crossed eyes were seen as attractive, and parents would try and force this upon their children by hanging a stone from a string between their baby's eyes, attached to a headband. They also desired long noses with a pronounced beak, and many would use an artificial nose bridge to achieve this hooked shape. Another unusual beauty standard was pointed teeth, and commoners and nobles alike would file their teeth into sharp points. If they could afford it they would have precious stones drilled into them too.

Body paint was another technique used to determine a Maya's role in society. Black was used for unmarried men, blue for priests, bands of red and black for warriors, while red was a popular shade for all.

WOMEN

Despite being subordinate to men, women played a much more central role in Maya society than previously believed. There were female rulers, usually as regents for their child sons or as widows to kings. Women also frequently served the role of priestesses at specific sacred sites, usually places of pilgrimage such as caves and cenotes (naturally formed sinkholes). These sites would draw not only commoners, but nobles, who would give praise to Ix Chel, the goddess of fertility, midwifery and medicine. Priestesses also fulfilled the role of fortune tellers.

The most common role for Maya women was to take care of the household, which was no small thing. The importance of childbirth was such that women were well respected. Women also played an incredibly crucial role in maintaining the economy by way of the textile industry. Women were spinners, weavers and dyers, creating elaborate works of art in textiles to supply the bountiful trade networks. It was also not unheard of for women to work as farmers, and in some areas as herders, raising deer to feed the population.

CHILDREN

The birth of a child was a hugely important moment in Maya society, not only as a sign of good fortune but also of wealth. All children were given a childhood name by a priest, but the nickname bestowed by their family was what they commonly went by. From the day they were born children had a strict path to follow in life. The key value which they were expected to uphold was to respect and help their elders. A strong work ethic which could be used to better the community was also an important aspect. From the age of just five or six, the children were given the responsibility to contribute to their families. This crucial age was marked for boys by a white bead being woven into their hair, while girls received a red shell to wear at their waist. These symbols of purity were not to be removed until they engaged in a ceremony that would mark the end of their childhood, usually around the age of 14 for a boy, and 12 for a girl.

Girls and boys would both follow their respective parents, mothers and fathers, to learn their trade. Girls would be encouraged to perform household duties such as cooking, spinning yarn, weaving and cleaning. Meanwhile, boys would be taught the art of farming as soon as they reached the age of five.

Although girls would live with their parents until they were married, boys were expected to be independent once they reached adolescence. Young unmarried men would live together in houses until they were matched with a wife. These marriages were almost always arranged,

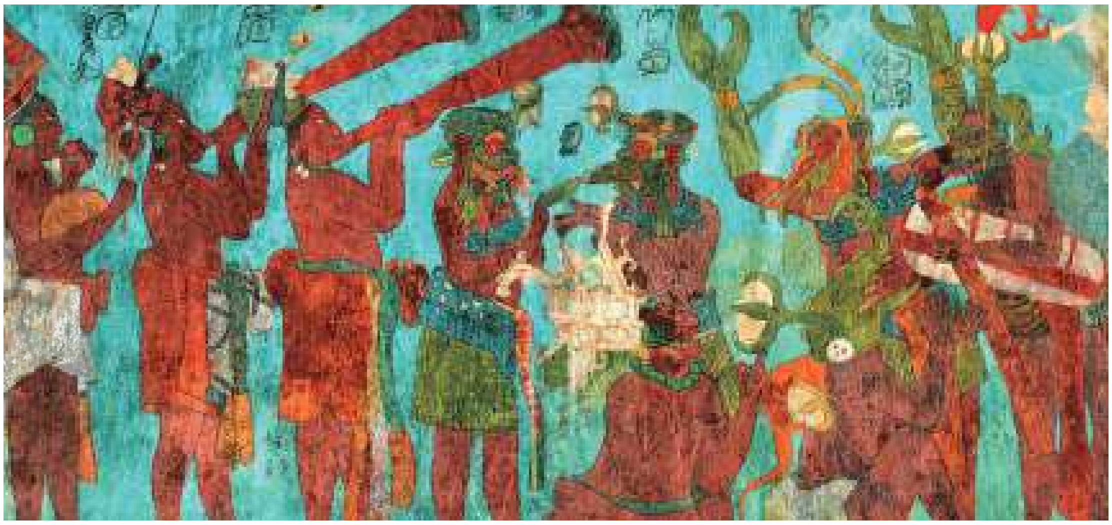


Image source: wiki/AncientMexico.com

ABOVE Maya instruments included clay whistles, trumpets, flutes and drums

> “THE MOST POPULAR FOOD THE MAYA INTRODUCED TO THE WORLD WAS CHOCOLATE, HARVESTED FROM CACAO TREES”

and did not occur until men were 18 and the girls at least 15. The newly married man’s duty did not end there; after marriage he was expected to live with his wife’s parents and assist his new father-in-law on the farm for up to six years. This follows the key Mayan tradition of respecting and looking after the elders in the community, and helped build strong familial bonds.

FOOD

Besides maize, other popular ingredients included beans, squash, chilies, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, black beans and papaya. A typical Maya breakfast would comprise of a porridge of maize and chilies called saka. Dumplings made from maize dough filled with vegetables and meat would serve as a midday snack. The main evening meal would usually involve tortillas eaten with a stew of vegetables and, if they were lucky enough to afford it, meat. Popular meat included fish, deer, duck and turkey. The Maya were also known to eat dogs, guinea pigs and even armadillo.

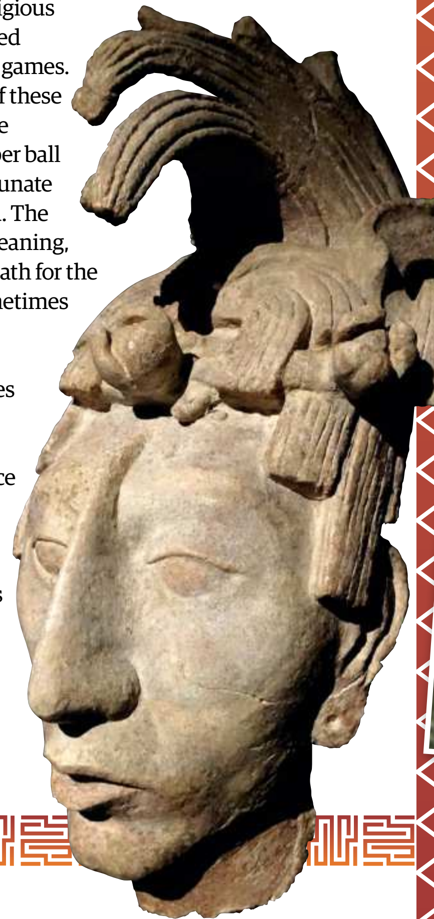
By far the most popular food that the Maya introduced to the world was chocolate, which they harvested from cacao trees. The cacao seeds were considered to be so valuable that they were traded like money, and chocolate was regarded as a precious gift from the gods themselves. Chocolate was a treat reserved for only those who could afford it – namely the wealthy nobles. They would drink it in a frothy liquid form on a daily basis. Chocolate was deemed so sacred that it was sometimes used as a replacement for sacrificial blood in religious ceremonies.

ENTERTAINMENT

Although most of a Maya’s time revolved around hard work to sustain the community, they also made time for entertainment. This entertainment usually revolved around religious ceremonies, and they enjoyed dancing, music and playing games. One of the most infamous of these games was Pok-A-Tok, where the players had to get a rubber ball into a hoop, with the unfortunate losing team being sacrificed. The game held deep religious meaning, symbolising victory over death for the winners, but it was also sometimes just played for fun.

Mayan society had many dances for different purposes and occasions, including the shadow of the trees, the monkey dance and the dance of the stag. Usually these dances were offered as a form of worship to the gods. Musical performances involved everyone in society, from old to young and rich to poor, and it was not unheard of for these festivals to attract over 15,000 spectators.

BELOW This stucco head of a Maya king shows the incredible work of artisans and also the Maya ideal of beauty

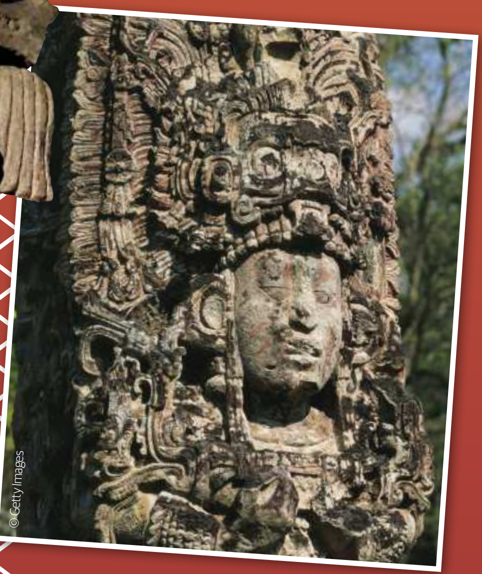


AN A-MAIZE-ING POWER

One thing united all of Maya society – maize

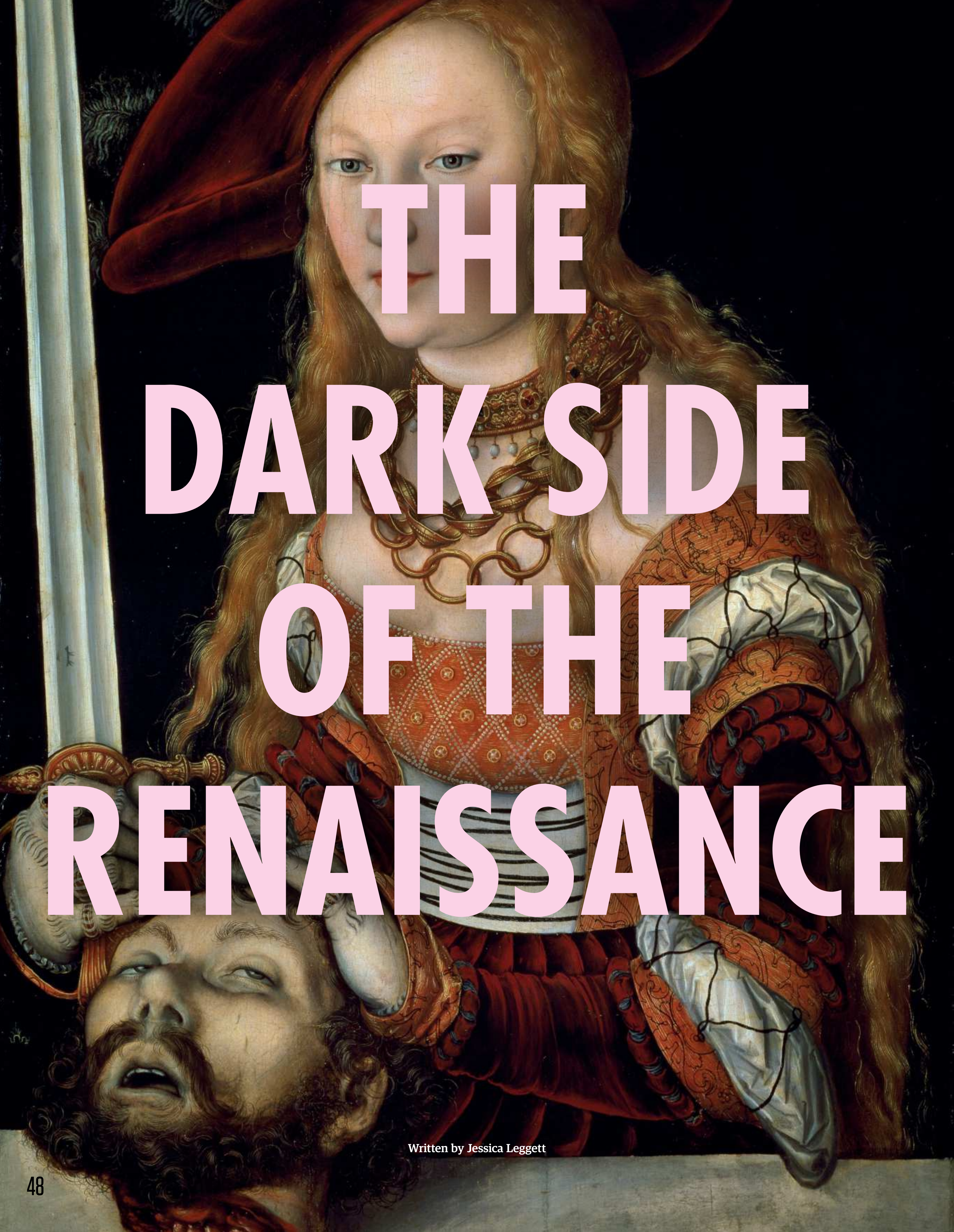
Maize, or corn, was so central to Maya culture that it intersected with almost every aspect of their lives. Maize grew well in the hot climate, could easily be stored and was capable of sustaining the entire population. Maize formed a base for many popular meals: tortillas, porridge and even drinks. The crop was also used in medicines to combat ailments such as tumours, diabetes and hypertension. The importance of maize extended to religion, as the Maya believed that human beings were originally created from maize.

This fascination with maize extended even to Maya ideas of beauty. As an ear of corn narrows near the top, an elongated head was seen as an attractive feature. Maya would use a process called trepanning to force newborns’ heads into this shape. Boards were attached to the head to press against the forehead to force it to slope up and backwards. This gruesome practice was not limited to the nobility, and 90 per cent of Mayan skulls have been found to be elongated in this way, demonstrating just how important maize was to the entire population.



© Getty Images

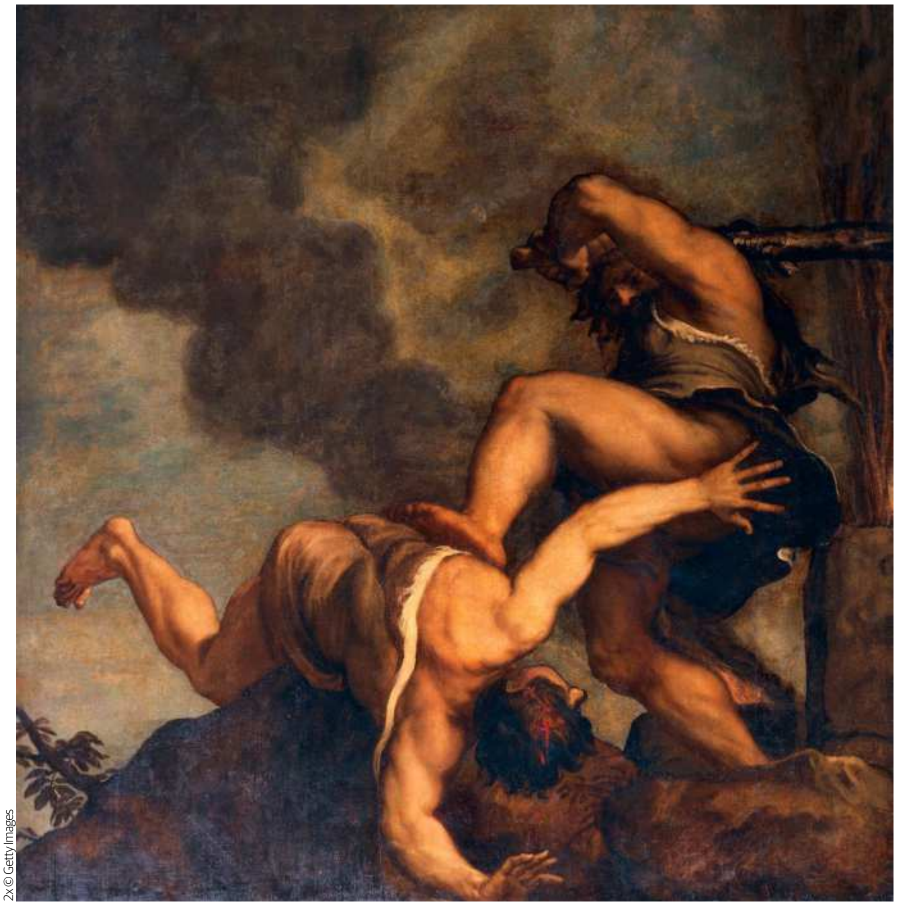
Yum Kaax, the Maya god of agriculture, was one of the culture’s most prominent mythical figures, which reflects the importance of crops like maize



THE DARK SIDE OF THE RENAISSANCE

Written by Jessica Leggett

Exploring the violence, tragedy and terror of one of the most celebrated periods in European history with Professor Catherine Fletcher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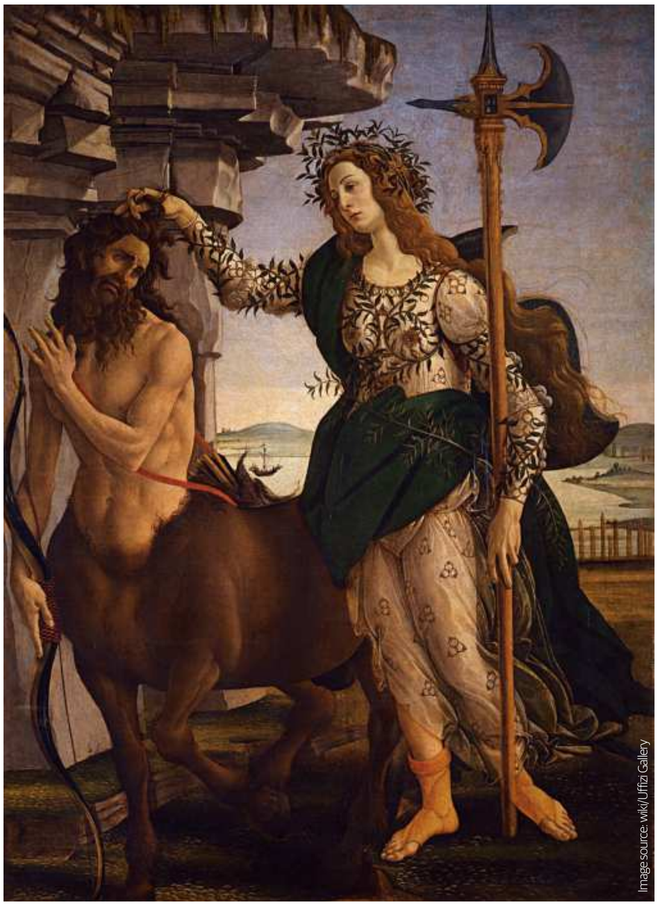


Image source: wiki/Uffizi Gallery

ABOVE-LEFT *Cain And Abel*, painted c. 1543 by Titian

ABOVE-RIGHT *Pallas And The Centaur* by Botticelli c.1482, commissioned by the Medici family

"The problem is if we don't think about the hardships and the atrocities, then we get this very one-sided story of the glories of Western civilization and 'wasn't European culture great?' without seeing any of the negatives to that," argues Catherine Fletcher, the author of *The Beauty And The Terror: An Alternative History Of The Italian Renaissance*.

Whether you're an art lover or not, there's a high chance that you will be able to name at least one of the most famous works to have come out of the Italian Renaissance: for example, two of Leonardo da Vinci's iconic paintings, the *Last Supper* and the *Mona Lisa*, or Michelangelo's *David*, his famous sculptural masterpiece. Yet did you know that Da Vinci pitched his abilities as a military engineer and his various inventions to his patron, Ludovico Sforza, Duke of Milan, before mentioning his ability as an artist? Or that Michelangelo was hired as a military architect by the government of Florence to build fortifications for the city from 1528 to 1529?

For centuries, the world has marvelled at the artistic and scientific achievements that emerged in the Renaissance, essentially putting the period on a pedestal as one of the greatest eras of mankind. However, in celebrating the Renaissance, we often forget about the tragedy and catastrophe that frequently played a vital role in its development, looking at it in isolation rather than in the context of the time. "When you're walking around an art gallery, you're looking at the artworks and you're appreciating them for their value and for the artistic sense, and you get this sense of development through art," explains Fletcher. "But what you don't necessarily get, beyond sometimes a limited extent in exhibitions, is that big social context of what was the world like that these people were living in when they were painting these works."

An example of a tragic event that influenced the Renaissance is the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, a moment that not only marked the end of the Byzantine Empire but also saw thousands of citizens murdered, deported and enslaved by the Ottomans. Consequently, many Greek scholars fled to Western Europe, settling in Italy. "Although the study of ancient Greek is already a matter of some interest in Renaissance Italy, this group of refugees gives a new boost to that intellectual culture," says Fletcher. These scholars brought their books, manuscripts and knowledge of their civilisation – particularly of the Greek language – with them to Italy, which had an enormous impact on the development of Renaissance thinking, all as a result of their home being conquered.

> **"IN CELEBRATING THE RENAISSANCE, WE OFTEN FORGET ABOUT THE TRAGEDY AND CATASTROPHE THAT FREQUENTLY PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN ITS DEVELOPMENT"**

Italy, divided into several independent states, was also locked in persistent war and conflict for decades due to the drawn-out and bloody Italian Wars, a series of conflicts that saw European countries, mainly France, Spain and the Italian states themselves, fight for control over Italy and thereby gain supremacy of the continent. It was thanks to their careers in these wars that many military commanders had the funds to commission pieces of Renaissance art. “A lot of these small centres of northern Italy, which have these brilliant cultural courts, in places like Mantua, Ferrara and Urbino, the dukes and the princes of those little states are all basically renting themselves and their companies out for hire as mercenaries to the larger Italian states,” explains Fletcher. “That’s where they get a big chunk of the money to pay for these art commissions and palaces… I think that things would not have developed in quite the same way had there not been the Italian Wars.”

One of these military commanders was Alfonso I d’Este, Duke of Ferrara, the husband of Lucrezia Borgia and whom Fletcher describes as “a massive military innovator”. The duke took part in the League of Cambrai, an alliance that primarily consisted of France and the Papal States, which spearheaded the League, against Venice. He secured victory in the Battle of Polesella against the Venetians in 1509 and remained allied with France after the Papal States switched sides, helping the French to defeat the Papal States and the Spanish at the Battle of Ravenna in 1512. He was a noted cultural patron, hiring Giovanni Bellini to paint *The Feast Of The Gods*, and commissioning two portraits of himself from Titian, as well as multiple artworks including *The Worship Of Venus*.

“I THINK THAT THINGS WOULD NOT HAVE DEVELOPED IN QUITE THE SAME WAY HAD THERE NOT BEEN THE ITALIAN WARS”

Throughout the Italian Wars and right in the midst of the Renaissance, various Italian cities were subject to violent sackings as armies slaughtered thousands of people while mercilessly raping citizens and pillaging along the way. The scale of violence used in the Sack of Rome, 1527, sent shockwaves through the rest of Italy and Europe. The troops of Emperor Charles V, whose dominions included Spain and the Holy Roman Empire, that were stationed in Italy were angry that they hadn’t been paid and so they mutinied, plundering Rome and leaving devastation in their wake. They even imprisoned Pope Clement VII! It’s said that the Sack of Rome signalled the end of the High Renaissance, the period that’s considered to be the peak of Renaissance art, although this is still a matter of debate. Regardless, the fallout from this brutal episode severely affected the cultural activity in Rome as many artists and intellectuals were killed or forced to flee the city, and numerous humanist libraries were destroyed.

With Spain’s involvement in the Italian Wars and the subsequent impact on the Renaissance, it’s important to consider the role that empire and colonisation played. As Fletcher explains, “Spanish conquests in the Americas very quickly produces a lot of money that finances Spanish conquests in Italy.” Not only did the Spanish colonization of the Americas fund their involvement in the Italian Wars in the 16th century, but it also contributed to the development of the Western trade and the Atlantic slave trade, a devastating and destructive practice that generated wealth for traders. When it comes to the Renaissance, Fletcher says, “Unless you are really conscious about putting the pieces together then the global connections don’t necessarily stand out.”

Economic change was not only driven by colonization and trade, but also by the numerous health pandemics that swept across Europe, in particular the Black Death, which is estimated to have killed around a third of the continent’s population in the 14th century. “In the aftermath of that, of course, there is a huge financial shake-up, with wages rising because you’ve got a labour shortage and there is a whole set of knock-on effects from that into the early stages of the Italian Renaissance,” explains Fletcher. With the economy on the rise in the aftermath of the pandemic, social mobility became easier and the wealth of Italian merchants grew, giving them the money to spend on cultural goods such as art and architecture.

One of the most famous merchant families of the Renaissance – indeed one of the most famous merchant families in history – was the Medici, who started out as wool traders before moving into banking in the 15th century. With the Medici Bank becoming the largest bank in Europe, this incredibly wealthy family propelled themselves to political power in Florence, building a dynasty that would have a lasting impact on the culture of the Renaissance. For example, it was thanks to the patronage of Lorenzo de’ Medici that some of the most celebrated Renaissance artists, such as Botticelli, Da Vinci and Michelangelo, could focus exclusively on their artwork without the need for a second job to supplement their income.

Image source: wiki/Museum Mayer van den Bergh

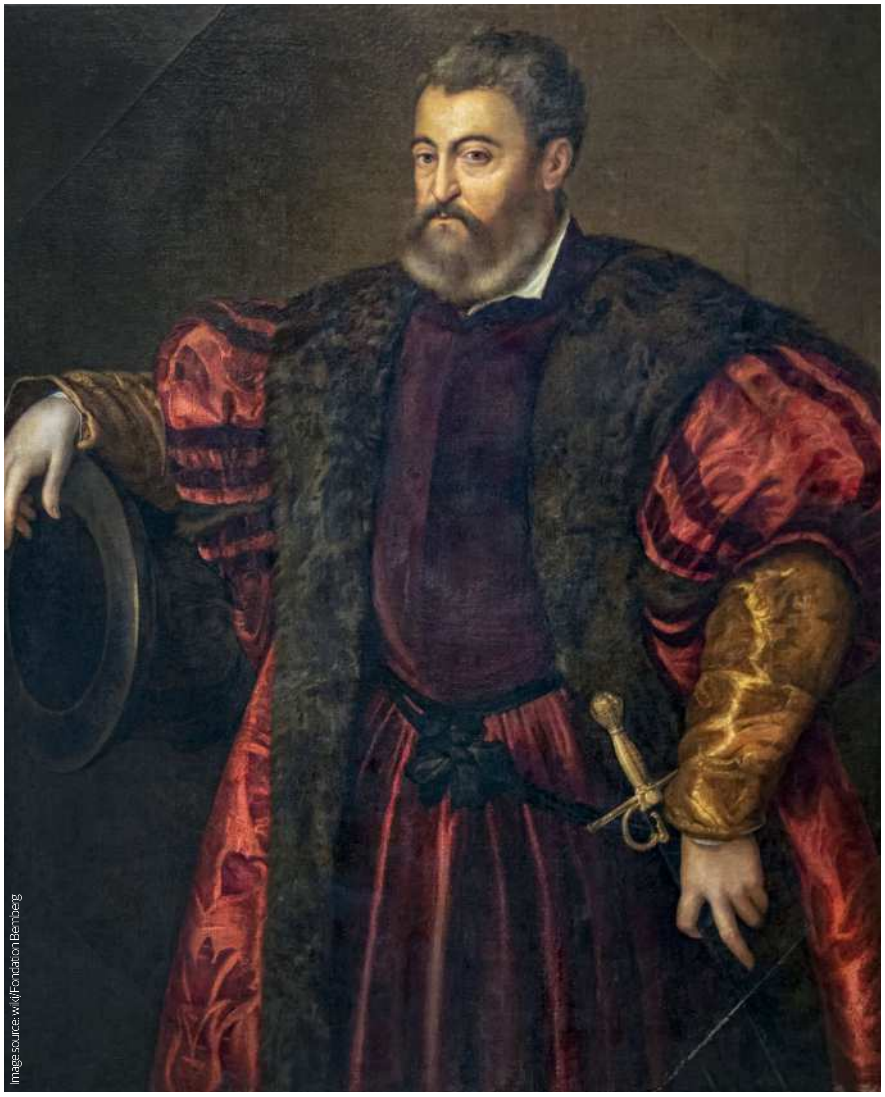
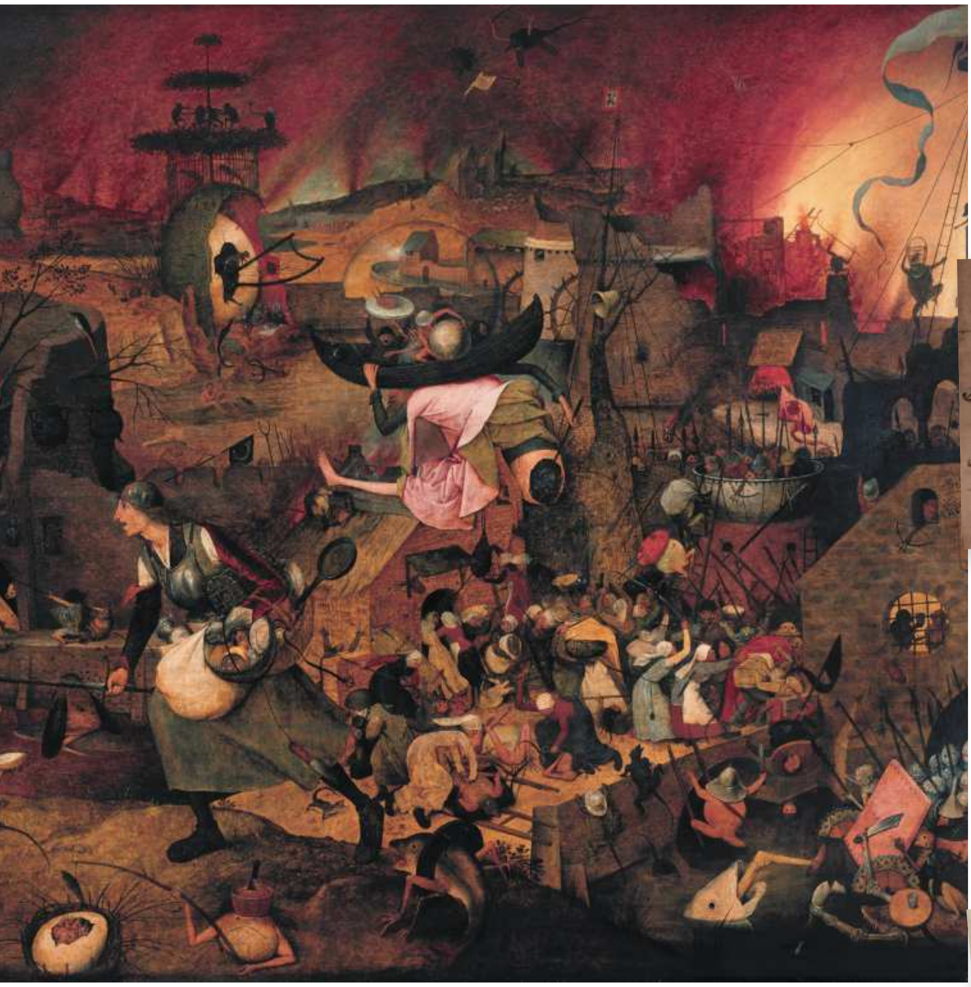


Image source: wiki/Fondation Bemberg



ABOVE Pieter Bruegel the Elder's 1563 oil painting *Dull Gret*

LEFT One of the two portraits of Alfonso I d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, painted by Titian

Believe it or not, artistic commissions made by bankers such as the Medici were also partly influenced by their religious beliefs at the time. "For Christians in this period lending money at interest is regarded as a sin, it's inappropriate," explains Fletcher. "Obviously, you can make a lot of money by being a banker and so what Christian bankers tend to do to atone for this bad behaviour is that they do good work. They commission religious artworks in churches, they patronise churches, they build family chapels and of course incidentally, or perhaps not so incidentally, this helps to perhaps burnish the reputation of their family because the chapel gets the family name attached."

Aside from mercantile wealth, the economic change that came in the wake of the Black Death also contributed to the growth in Renaissance humanist thinking, at a time when the Protestant Reformation was also taking hold in Europe. "Martin Luther, who is generally regarded as the person who kicked off the original Protestant Reformation in 1517, is not terribly influenced by the kind of humanist thinking, not humanist in the modern sense, that characterised Renaissance intellectual circles," says Fletcher. "But some Protestants certainly are influenced by that method, and one of the important contributions of these new academic techniques of textual criticism is that when they get applied to scripture and church documents, they start challenging, to some extent, the authority of the church."

Thanks to this new method of textual criticism, humanist thinkers were able to expose deceit right at the core of the Catholic Church, against a backdrop of increasing religious tension. It was proved that the *Donation Of Constantine*, a document that was supposedly a 4th century decree from the Roman Emperor Constantine handing the authority over

▶

DA VINCI'S WAR MACHINES

The polymath designed numerous military inventions

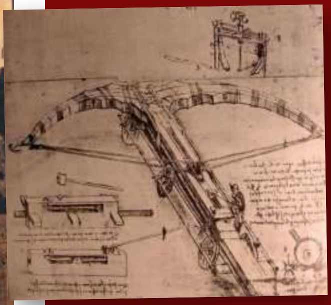


Image source: wiki/Bortolon

CROSSBOW

In 1486, Da Vinci drew several designs for a giant crossbow, which was also known at the time as a 'ballista'. The weapon had a crank on the side to wind the gears and arm the device, which could be fired by either using a rope to tug on the release catch or by hitting it with a mallet.

ARMOURED CAR

Perhaps one of Da Vinci's most famous inventions, his 'armoured car' or tank was inspired by a turtle's shell. It needed four men to operate it using hand cranks while others operated the cannons, which were located around the perimeter of the tank, allowing it to fire in any direction.

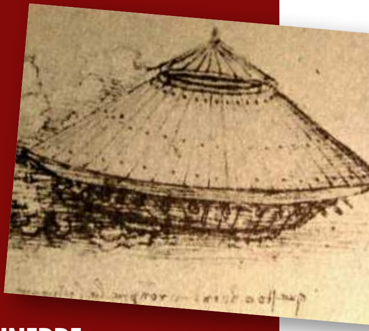


Image source: wiki/Bortolon

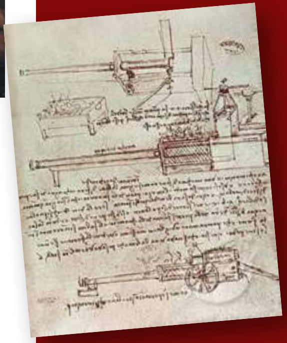


Image source: wiki/superstock

ARCHITONNERRE

Da Vinci's architonnerre was a steam-powered cannon that used charcoal to boil water in a copper container, which would generate steam to fire the weapon. A safety valve prevented too much pressure from building up, but once this valve was closed it would start the firing sequence to launch the muzzle-loaded cannonball.

MACHINE GUN

A man who was way ahead of his time, Da Vinci sketched the first known design for a machine gun, with the gun barrels resembling the pipes of an organ. There are 33 gun barrels, mounted in rows of 11 on a revolving triangular piece, and the idea was that once the first row of barrels had fired, the second would be ready to go, and so on.

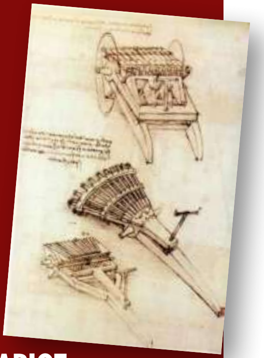


Image source: wiki/reproarte.com

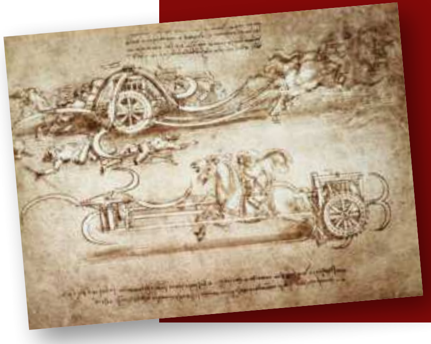
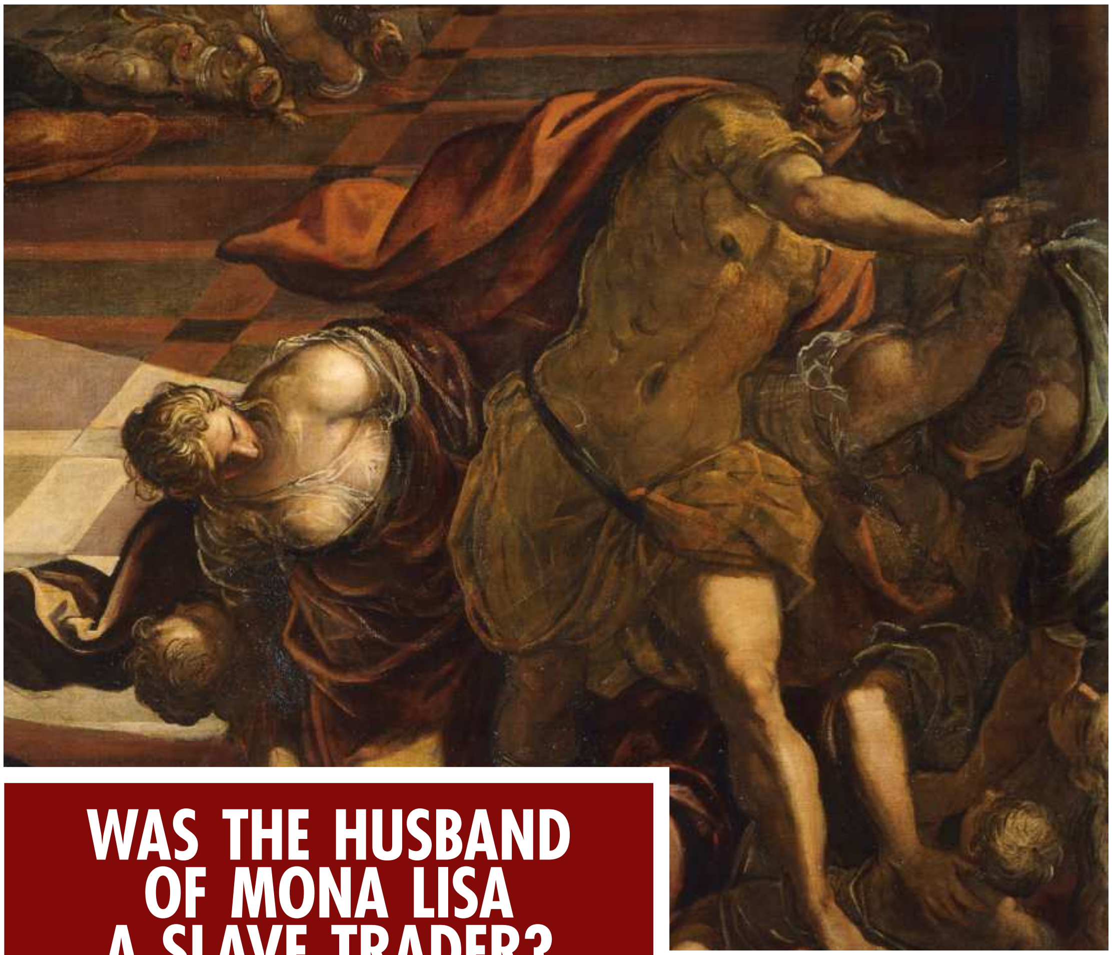
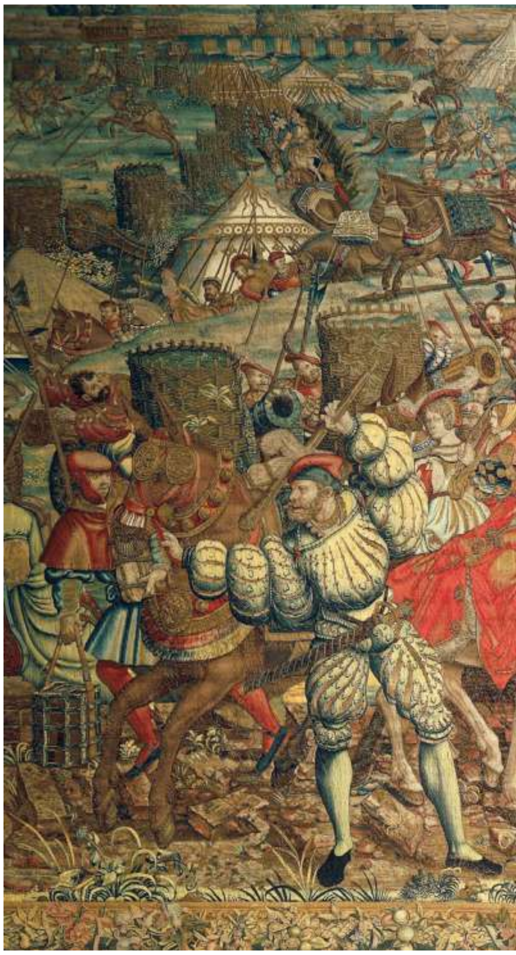


Image source: wiki/Web Gallery of Art

SCYTHED CHARIOT

He created his design for a scythed chariot around 1483, with scythes fixed on both the front and the back of the chariot. The four revolving scythes at the front were intended to strike down infantry, while the scythes in the back were supposed to protect the rider from any attacks from behind.





WAS THE HUSBAND OF MONA LISA A SLAVE TRADER?

The dark truth behind the world's most famous smile

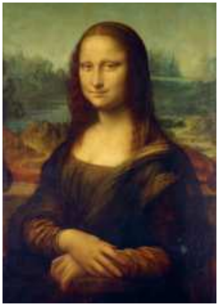


Image source: wiki/Louvre Museum

Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is one of the art world's most iconic masterpieces and the sitter with the enigmatic smile, Lisa del Giocondo, was an Italian noblewoman who was born into the influential Gherardini family. At the age of 15, she married Francesco del Giocondo, a Florentine businessman who – according to recent findings – was involved in slave trading.

Fletcher explains: "You have big Italian interests in trade with West Africa, often via Portugal, and one of the people who is involved in that, who I was fascinated to turn up in the course of researching this book, is the husband of Mona Lisa. He was himself involved in importing enslaved people from Portugal, probably originally some of them from North or West Africa."

It is said that Del Giocondo regularly bought female slaves and had them baptised, but it's also believed that he purchased too many of them to simply keep them on to serve in his household. And so it's assumed that he must have sold some of them off as a result. At the moment, it seems that the question of whether Del Giocondo was a slave trader can't be confirmed beyond doubt, but the evidence so far certainly raises some suspicions.

ABOVE-LEFT
A detail from *The Slaughter Of The Innocents* by Tintoretto

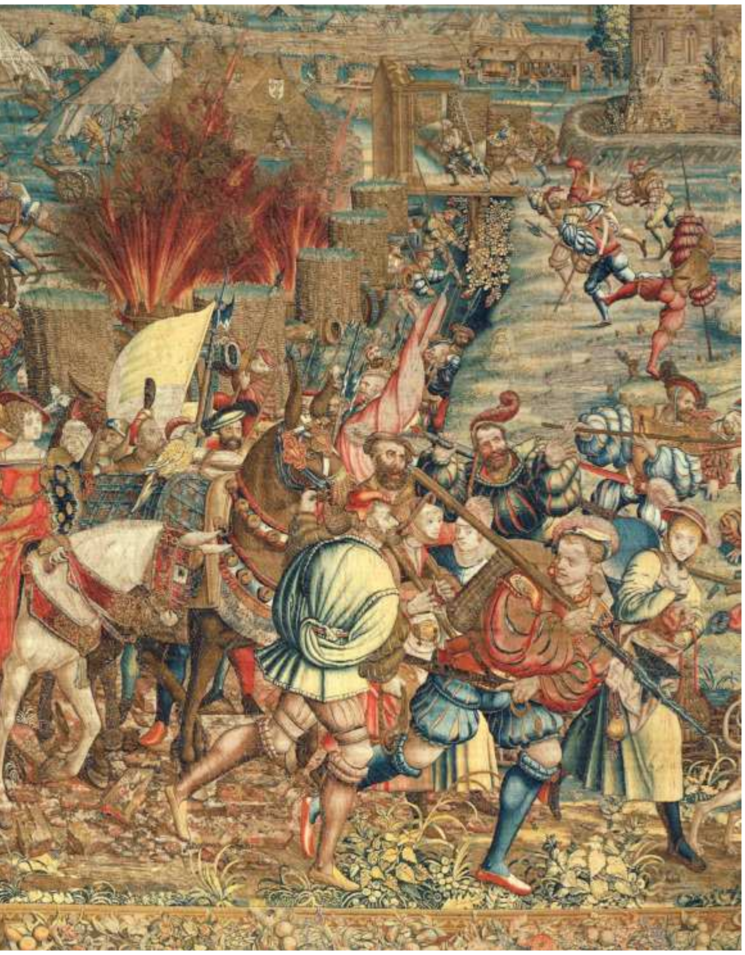
ABOVE-RIGHT
A tapestry depicting the Battle of Pavia, a key conflict in the Italian Wars

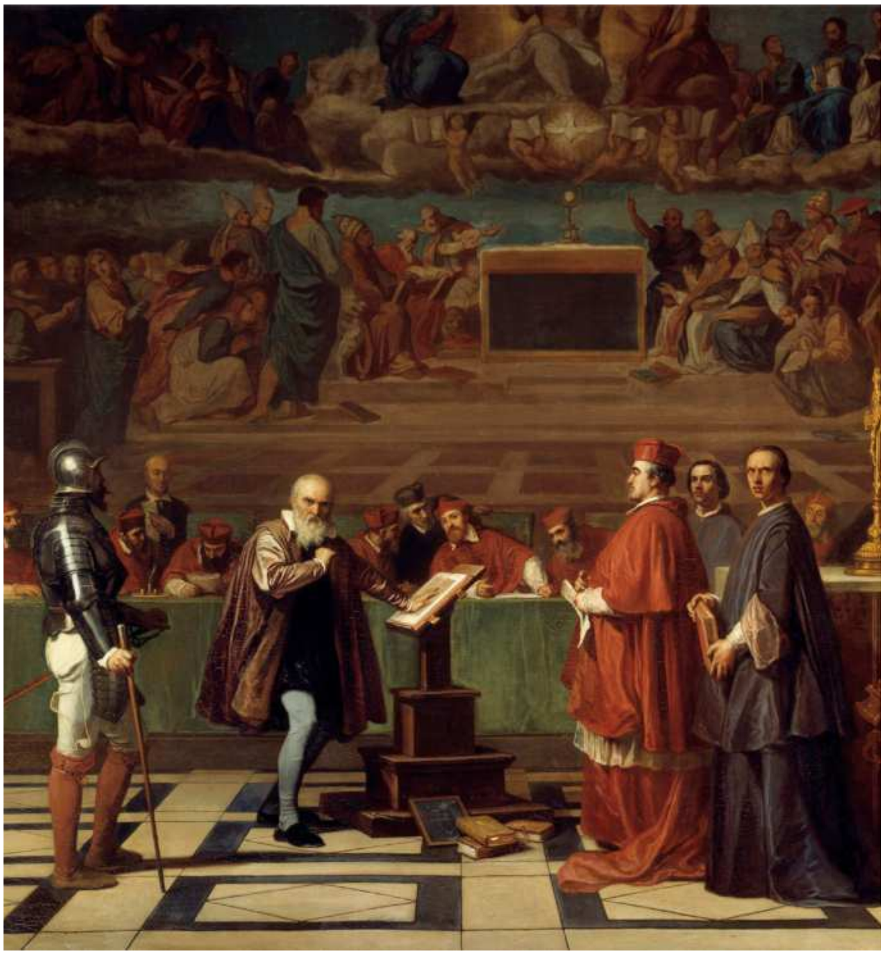
the Western Roman Empire to the Pope, was a fake. "There were lots of rumours about whether or not this document was actually authentic so this wasn't particularly new, but the people who actually helped to expose it as a forgery were using those humanist techniques of checking off and detailed close study of a text in order to identify whether or not it really matched up to the claims that were made for it," says Fletcher. "So that in itself starts to question the basis for the rule of the Popes in the way that they had asserted it for some time."

It wasn't just the humanist thinkers who posed problems for the church, with rational and scientific thinking on the rise during the Renaissance too. "Towards the end of the 16th century and into the 17th century, you start to get more of a problem with scientific investigation clashing with the church," explains Fletcher. "I think, for a lot of the time, the concern that the Catholic Church has, primarily in Italy at least, is about social order and maintaining its own authority."

However, this doesn't mean that there was a blanket ban on philosophical conversations on science or other topics altogether, but rather the need to keep these discussions private rather than out in the open. "Provided you're keeping it to yourself and that it's not disrupting people's public respect for the church then they're actually quite relaxed about that," says Fletcher. "What they have a problem with is heretical ideas getting out there into society at large and potentially prompting movements like the type in the countries that have the Protestant Reformation against the church authorities."

A perfect example of this is the Galileo Affair, which lasted on and off from 1610 to 1633. Galileo Galilei was a physicist and astronomer who openly supported heliocentrism, the





3x © Getty Images

ABOVE Galileo Galilei on trial for heresy before the Holy Office in the Vatican

astronomical model that states that it is the Sun – and not the Earth – that is at the centre of the solar system, following his discovery of four of Jupiter's moons and the phases of Venus. Heliocentrism went against the beliefs of the Catholic Church, who deemed it to be heretical and against scripture, and Galileo was interrogated and subsequently convicted of heresy in 1633, spending the rest of his life under house arrest. Today, we know that Galileo was right all along and his name has finally been cleared, but his prosecution, imprisonment and loss of reputation will always be a dark moment of the Renaissance.

Even intellectual advancements of the Renaissance that don't necessarily seem problematic, in subjects such as maths, can become so when considering the context. "The developments in maths are important if you're trying to investigate artillery trajectories, so a lot of the intellectual achievements have practical applications that are perhaps darker and more sinister than we might necessarily assume if we're just looking at the intellectual activity in the abstract," explains Fletcher.

It's clear that the great artistic, scientific and intellectual developments of the Renaissance occurred alongside troubling and problematic trends and events happening in the world during this period and indeed was impacted and financed by them. Having said all this, does this mean that historians of the Renaissance have been ignoring this dark side? "I'm not sure that it's necessarily that the events are ignored, but they tend to get kind of put into silos," says Fletcher. "You've got an art history and a history of religious change, which takes in the long process of Catholic reform and then the rise of Protestantism and the Catholic response to that, so that gets done almost on its own. Then you get a history of empire and a global history of what's going on around the world at this time, then you get a history of war and warfare. Historians, particularly professional academic historians, like to often write thematically and they will pick one of these things and study the trends, but of course, if you're living there at the time all of them are happening at once."

With violence, warfare, pandemics, immorality, colonialism and the slave trade all running rife and having a massive impact during this period, it is important to bear in mind the tragedies and the atrocities that make up the dark side of the Renaissance. Nonetheless, Fletcher reminds us: "That's not to say that we can't or shouldn't enjoy looking at Renaissance art because I think it's fabulous… but I think it's important for people to understand that if you only think about the wonderful beauties of it, then you're only getting half a history." ○

"HUMANIST THINKERS WERE ABLE TO EXPOSE DECEIT RIGHT AT THE CORE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH"

EXPERT BIO

Professor Catherine Fletcher is a historian of the Renaissance and early modern Europe whose previous books include *The Black Prince Of Florence* and *The Divorce of Henry VIII: The Untold Story*. Her new book *The Beauty And The Terror* is available now from The Bodley Head.

CATHERINE FLETCHER
THE BEAUTY AND THE TERROR
AN ALTERNATIVE HISTORY OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

Opening image and font: © Getty Images

THE NAZIS ARE COMING!

INSIDE KANALKAMPF, STAGE ONE OF HITLER'S PLAN TO INVADE BRITAIN AND WIN THE WAR IN WESTERN EUROPE

WRITTEN BY JONATHAN GORDON
BASED ON THE WORK OF
DOUGLAS C DILDY AND PAUL F CRICKMORE

"The gratitude of every home in our island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world, [...] goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of the world war by their prowess and by their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

So spoke Winston Churchill on 20 August 1940. That final line in his commendation of the RAF's efforts to stem the tide of German invasion has become one of his most famous and repeated declarations. The Battle of Britain had been waging for many weeks at this point, and now the Blitz was also approaching London. And just as the RAF was the focus of Churchill's and the nation's gratitude, so it had also been the target of Hitler's attention. For all the efforts and sacrifices that came in the later months of the Battle of Britain, it was the resilience shown at the beginning that staved off the full-scale invasion of the British Isles the Führer so desired.

Hannes Trautloft secured five victories serving with the Condor Legion in Spain and another with 2./JG 77 in the Polish campaign. By the end of the Battle of France he'd been promoted to Hauptmann and commanded I./JG 20. On 25 August 1940, he became Kommodore of JG 54

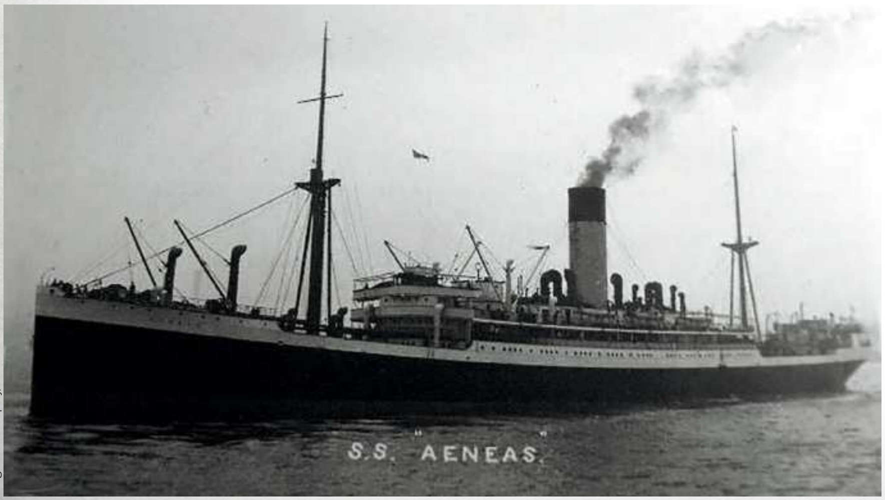
Image Source: Osprey/Author Collection

PRELUDE TO INVASION

After the Dunkirk evacuation of British personnel from mainland Europe and the surrender of France to Germany a couple of weeks later, Nazi Germany's sweep across Western Europe was complete. Now Hitler set his eyes a little further west to the British Isles in what he believed could be the final move that would win the war in the west and allow him to focus all of his ire on the USSR. The plan to invade Britain was titled Unternehmen Seelöwe (Operation Sea Lion) and stage one of that plan Kanalkampf (Channel Fight).

The objective of Kanalkampf was simple enough: disrupt supply chains in the English Channel and draw out Britain's air power to destroy as much of it as possible. Disrupting supplies would deplete resources, making defence of Britain all the more difficult in the long term, and weakening the RAF would make a land invasion much easier as the Luftwaffe would be able to concentrate solely on defending the German navy. The objectives of Kanalkampf were both individually important, but also mutually supporting. The thinking in Germany was that attacks on shipping lanes and convoys would be exactly the provocation that would entice RAF Fighter Command to send out its forces.

Thankfully, Fighter Command was more of less prepared for something like this. Sir Hugh Dowding, Air Officer Commanding Fighter Command, had been deliberately holding back fighters from flying sorties over France for some time. He was convinced that saving his forces for the defence of Great Britain would prove more sensible than sacrificing planes and pilots to a losing war on the Continent.



BELOW Carrying a varied cargo that included raw rubber, SS Aeneas was attacked and struck by two bombs on 2 July. She sank two days later

Image Source: Osprey/Author Collection

THE RAIDS BEGIN

On 24 May 1940 the Führer Directive Nr. 13 was issued by Hitler authorising Hermann Göring's Luftwaffe to begin direct attacks on the British Isles as soon as their forces were capable of doing so. That additional caveat acknowledged that German air power had been greatly depleted in the previous year through aircraft losses, pilot deaths and pilots being captured. However, with Germany having secured France and forced Britain back, its prisoners of war in France were now free and the Luftwaffe could begin building and securing new airfields around France and Belgium. With these tasks completed they would be in a far better position to launch consistent attacks on Britain.

From late June units began moving to Belgium and Holland, taking two weeks as it involved so many men and machines, with particular attention paid to establishing anti-aircraft defences, communications and supplies. Göring was leaving nothing to chance before he started sending his pilots out to attack the Channel. The Germans were also taking time to retrain and reorient the pilots they had freed from captivity as prisoners of war, not wishing to take chances on their ability to lead the fight. This is all to say that the German approach was considered and thoroughly planned. The RAF was going to be up against a full-strength Luftwaffe assault.

As July began so did the raids on Channel traffic, with Convoy OA178 being the first to fall victim to Nazi attack. The convoy from London to Liverpool (Liverpool being where many convoys then left to traverse the Atlantic) was caught between Torquay and Cherbourg with no air cover from the RAF as two dozen Ju 87 dive bombers attacked. One ship, the MV Dallas City, was sunk and four were damaged while others sought shelter at Portland Harbour, which was also then attacked. After this assault, the

Dornier Do 17Zs from KG 2 'Holzhammer' took part in the first large aerial engagement over the English Channel, on 10 July 1940, when they attacked convoy 'Bread', sinking two ships and a 700-ton sloop. They also damaged four RAF fighters

Image source: Osprey/AHB

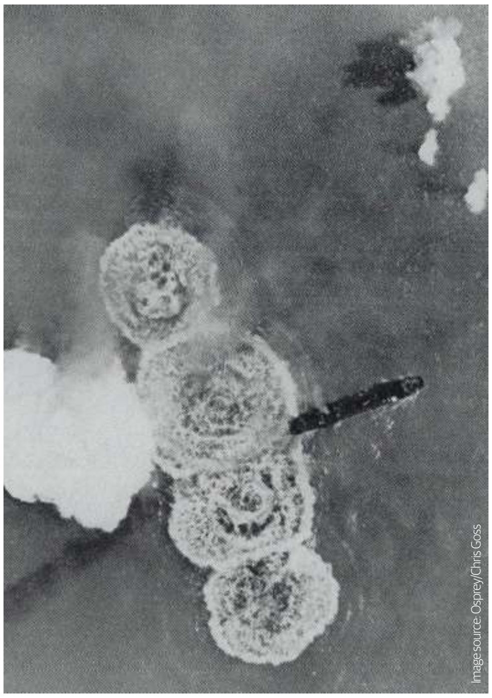


Image source: Osprey/Chris Goss

Image source: Osprey/Andy Saunders

ABOVE-LEFT
Believed to be the Estonian freighter SS Kolga sinking on 4 July 1940, this ship was among four merchantmen sunk from convoy OA 178. Eight more vessels were damaged

ABOVE-RIGHT
This 152 Squadron Spitfire force-landed on 8 August after engaging Bf 109s from II./JG 53. Its pilot, Sgt DN Robinson, escaped unhurt

Admiralty decided to change the route of its convoys for the Atlantic around Scotland instead of through the Channel.

DIVIDED UNITS

One of the issues that this first attack and many that followed highlighted was the degree of distrust and separation between the RAF and Royal Navy. This could be traced back to Dunkirk and the feeling among many in the Navy that the RAF had failed to adequately defend the evacuation from German harassment. As mentioned, it was Dowding's deliberate intention to hold back planes for what was to come, but this would have been little comfort to those who lost comrades and ships in that operation. We could also trace this mistrust between British military services to the fact that the RAF had only been made its own separate wing of the armed forces in 1918, something that some in the Navy had attempted to reverse at the outbreak of WWII.

This clash of viewpoints and priorities would need to be overcome if Britain was to withstand the attacks that were to come, but thankfully Nazi command was no less split in their approach. On 16 July Hitler gave his Directive Nr. 16 authorising the Wehrmacht to prepare for the invasion of Britain. Unternehmen Seelöwe was now building up in preparation for Kanalkampf's successful conclusion, but while the Führer set his sights on conquest, some around him had less lofty goals.

Göring saw the objective of his mission as forcing the British to accept terms of surrender and he had actually avoided attending meetings coordinating the services of the German military for the goal of invasion until 1 August. In the eyes of the Luftwaffe, Kanalkampf was meant to deplete and demoralise and that should be enough.

NEW TACTICS

While Allied shipping found alternative routes the Channel remained busy with smaller ships, not least those transporting coal to keep the British war effort alive. Despite the misgivings of RAF fighter command, they were ordered to give greater protection to convoys travelling through the Channel and, in combination with ever increasing German assaults, confrontations increased in the skies above this narrow stretch of sea. In this time the Luftwaffe began to fly faster fighters alongside its fixed-gear Stukas, practising this formation that would better protect its bombers from the RAF's more mobile planes.

This new tactic proved so effective in defending the dive bombers and sinking ships that Churchill wrote of one attack, "It is evident that the precautions taken for the safety of this convoy were utterly ineffectual, and that both in its composition and escort it was unsuited to the task prescribed. I must consider this one of the most lamentable episodes of the naval war so far."

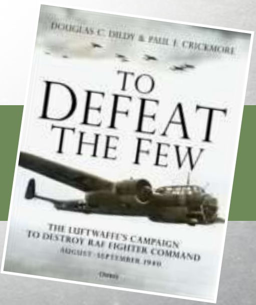
> "WHILE THE FÜHRER SET HIS SIGHTS ON CONQUEST, SOME AROUND HIM HAD LESS LOFTY GOALS"

As the attacks on Britain's ships gained traction, so the offensives became bolder and mainland targets along the coast were increasingly under assault. Nearly 1,500 barrage balloons began to be employed to deter lower-altitude attacks on British targets. Meanwhile, the RAF Photographic Reconnaissance Unit discovered that long-range artillery was being assembled near Calais, forcing the Navy to abandon Dover as a base. Ominously, the landing ground for an invasion by German forces was beginning to open up.

READY FOR INVASION

While the RAF did its best, the continued attacks forced the Channel to be closed from early August and the Nazis began to ramp up their plans for invasion by moving to mainland targets. In just five weeks, Kanalkampf had achieved at least one of its objectives: to greatly disrupt British defensive capabilities in the Channel. In total 34 British and Allied vessels were sunk by the Luftwaffe along with nine sunk by S-boats, U-boats, destroyers and mines. However, the second objective of drawing out and then destroying RAF planes was not as successful as Germany believed and the blockade approach would require many more months (if not years) of execution to starve the British Isles of resources. Invasion was the only option on the table but the Battle of Britain had only just gotten started, and the RAF was ready to mount its defence.

This feature is based on Douglas C Dildy and Paul F Crickmore's *To Defeat The Few: The Luftwaffe's Campaign To Destroy RAF Fighter Command*, available to pre-order from Osprey Publishing.


Douglas C. Dildy & Paul F. Crickmore
TO DEFEAT THE FEW
The Luftwaffe's Campaign to Destroy RAF Fighter Command August–September 1940
Osprey

Viking War

Main image and font: © Getty Images

Whether thanks to a gender bias on the part of previous generations of historians or the limited availability of artefacts and records, the lives of Norse women in the Viking era are particularly mysterious, but that's changing. While there are still debates about the exact roles women were and were not permitted to take on in their lives, it's becoming clearer and clearer that their world was far more diverse and featured more opportunity for self-expression than we might previously have believed. Vikings were a patriarchal society, but women could hold a lot of power and influence when circumstances opened up for them.

Some evidence for this can be seen in the stories they told each other; namely the Norse myths and in particular the role of Valkyrie. These warrior women determined who lived and died on the battlefield, claiming the fallen and taking them to the afterlife. As a recurring feature of the Viking sagas, Valkyrie play a multitude of roles, and much as the stories we tell today might give clues to the social and political events of the age, so we might be able to find interesting evidence from the epic Norse poems. To that end we spoke with Dr Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir, author of *Valkyrie: The Women Of The Viking World*, to discuss what we know about the lives of women in this era and what we can learn from the stories about the Valkyrie too.

Let's start with the basics. What roles did women play in Norse society?

The basic role was doing a lot of hard work and work that often gets missed

RIOR WOMEN

Dr Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir discusses the incredible myths of the Valkyrie and what they teach us about the lives of medieval Norse women

Written by Jonathan Gordon

as non-essential, and I think that at the moment we're realising just how essential it actually was. From quite a young age they were making all of the textiles, for example. They were dressing people and they were making the sails for the Viking ships. That was one of the things that underpinned the whole expansion of the Viking age, really. Besides that they are obviously doing the running of the farm and household when the husband is away on these Viking journeys. Some women were probably running, on a smaller scale, textile industries and other businesses like crafts. No one was entirely self-sufficient. There were crafts people making various objects and processing raw materials. Then probably quite a lot of women travelled with the men to take land and settle in new places or were involved in trade. There are graves of women with scales on them and people think they symbolise that they were tradeswomen. They could have quite an exciting and varied life and they had opportunities to expand the economy of the household and travel. And perhaps they might have positions of authority. There were probably some women who were involved in politics. In the Viking sagas there are a few wives and mothers of kings who are taking part in politics and that's reinforced by some of the graves.

Were any roles strictly gendered or prohibited for women?

There was nothing besides strictly biological limitations, such as giving birth to children. The 'women's work' was probably mostly carried out by women, but there was never a perfect separation between the genders. There have been

Image source: Bloomsbury

Jóhanna Friðriksdóttir has taught at Yale and held research positions in Reykjavik and Harvard. She currently works at the National Library of Norway.

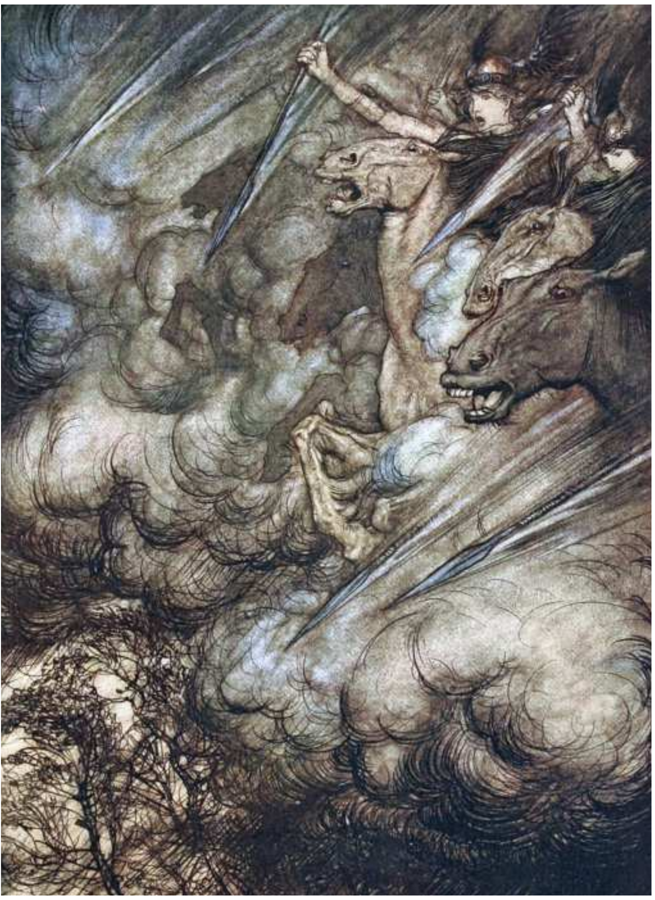


Image source: wiki/Arthur Rackham

ABOVE Arthur Rackham's illustrations from the early 20th century brought back a little more of the violence and anger that would have been more familiar to original writers of Valkyrie poems

BELOW Valkyrie temperament could change drastically depending on the author, from bloodthirsty and aloof to compassionate and loving, such as in this Hans Makart painting

male graves found with textiles equipment and there have been women's graves that contain weapons. For the most part women's work was quite gendered, but women expanding into traditionally male activities might have been more common than the other way around.

Could you tell us a little about how age and social standing might open up different opportunities for women in the Viking age?

When you're a young woman you don't really have a lot of agency at all and very often in the sagas when a young woman hits puberty she gets disposed of into marriage. She doesn't get to decide, usually, and there's a common trope where the girl gets asked if she's okay with it, but it's usually pretty clear that she doesn't have a choice. And that new part of her life begins where she's responsible for a household and doing all of these traditional women's tasks, but that's when she might be able to assert herself a little bit more because at that point she's able to spend some of the household's money and she gets a dowry, usually. She doesn't perhaps have complete economic independence, but she's able to decide how money is spent in some ways. If you're able to get into having a cottage industry, for example, producing textiles or other materials, you would be able to expand your income even more. And as the partner of her husband women were often depicted as participating in decisions in the sagas and strategising. I think just how much power and authority a woman might have would have varied from one individual to another. If you were to lose your husband and become a widow that could be a really bad thing, because you didn't have any man to act on behalf of the household in legal matters or defend the household if were are outside threats, so the sagas sometimes depict widows as being really vulnerable to various thugs and other members of their family. They might want to create an alliance and bully a widow into a new marriage. The laws suggest that she could say no, but it's often really difficult for the woman to withstand this pressure.

There's a story I mention in my book where there's a woman living in Birka, Sweden, which was a proto-urban centre. She seems fairly well off and when she dies there's a story about her donating all of her property to a church in Dorestad, Frisia, which would indicate that when she died she was pretty independent and powerful. If you were old and you had really good social status you might have had a lot of respect in your family, and there are stories of these old women telling everyone what to do and arranging marriages and so on.

Is there anything we can learn about the way women thought of themselves and were thought of by others in the way Valkyrie are depicted?

The Valkyrie are just enormously interesting figures because they are the ones who decide who lives and who dies on the battlefield. I don't think there are a lot of other cultures who have these female figures who are the ones who decide who dies. And seeing as women were the ones who were raising warriors, presumably, you have to wonder if this tells us something about the women raising the men and instilling this idea into them. But then, the Valkyrie image changes a lot across different sources. Sometimes Valkyrie are quite terrifying and they're not very alluring or anything like that. There are just corpses everywhere and they come because they are just greedy for corpses. Sometimes the language is pretty abject, being greedy for blood and death and so on. I think that maybe just tells us about how scary it would have been for some of these men to go into battle.

But then in some of the poetry the Valkyrie are depicted as extremely attractive and beautiful and they become

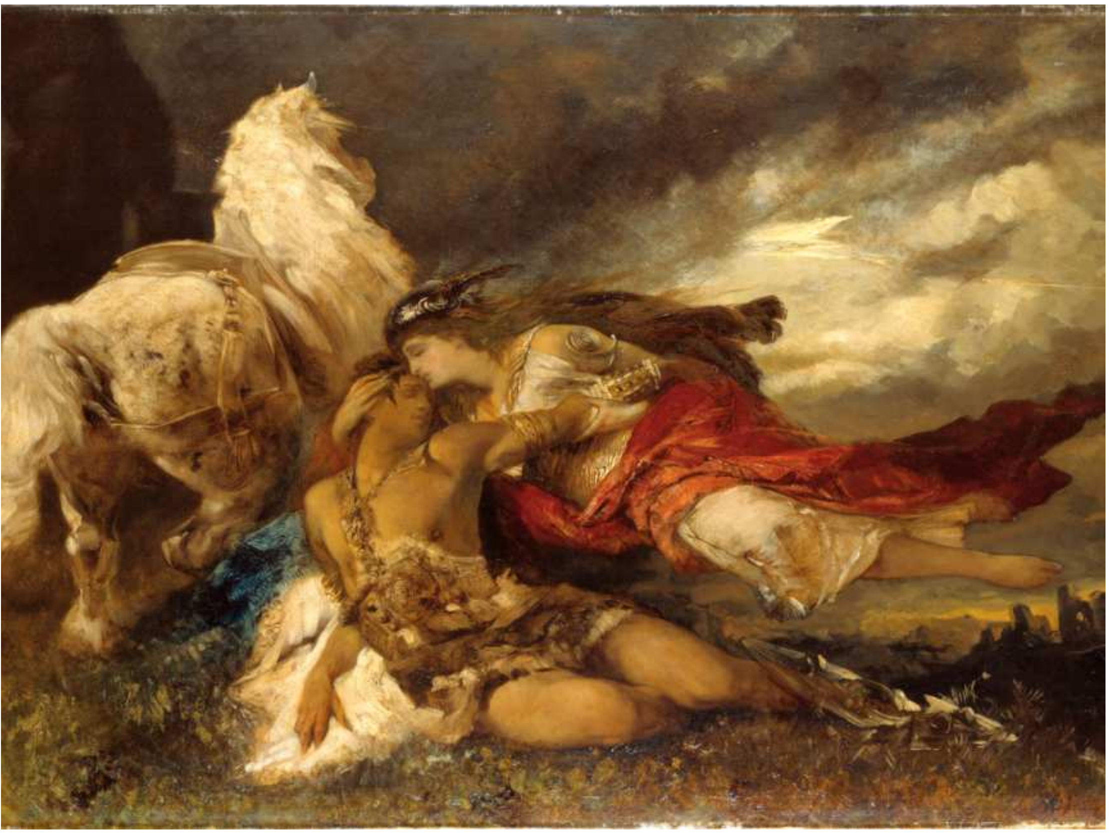


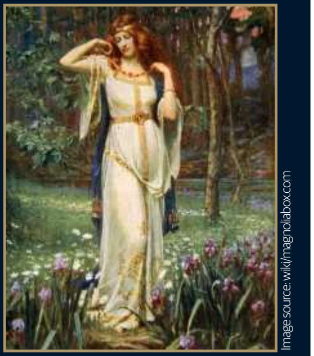
Image source: wiki/Nationalmuseum (Stockholm)

WOMEN OF POWER

Norse mythology was full of influential female figures

FREYJA

Primarily associated with love and fertility, Freyja is also heavily linked to war, and as the mistress of her own heavenly land she was said to receive half of all the warriors who fell in battle. Some would go to her field, Fólkvangr, and half would go to Odin's Valhalla.



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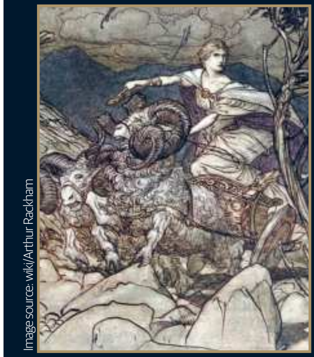


Image source: wiki/Arthur Rackham

FRIGG

Queen of Asgard and wife of Odin, Frigg is also the earth mother and was believed to have the power to see into the future, although she would not share her insights. Her similarities to Freyja suggest they may have derived from one pre-existing myth.

HEL

Daughter of Loki and appointed by Odin, Hel rules over the underworld that shares her name. She also receives a portion of the dead and sits in judgement of the souls that arrive with her. Along with the Valkyrie, she is a further representation of death as female.

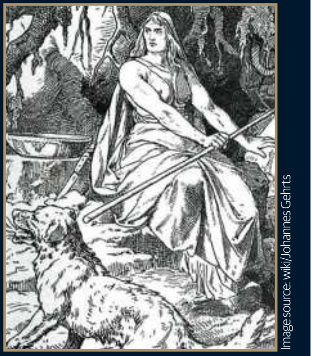


Image source: wiki/Johannes Gehrts

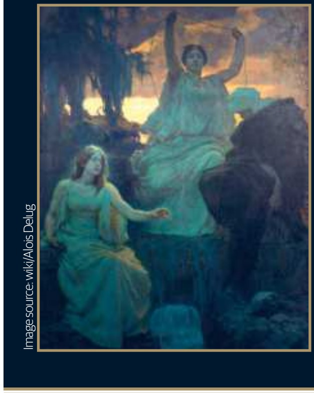


Image source: wiki/Alois Delug

NORNS

Ruling over the destiny of both humanity and the gods, the Norns are not strictly deities, but rather giants (Jotuns) who tend to the tree that connects the nine realms, Yggdrasill. Some Norns could be kind, but others were responsible for death and misfortune.

RIGHT The German obsession with Norse mythology and iconography was mocked by Polish-Jewish artist Arthur Szyk in this 1942 caricature of Valkyrie flying into battle for the Nazis

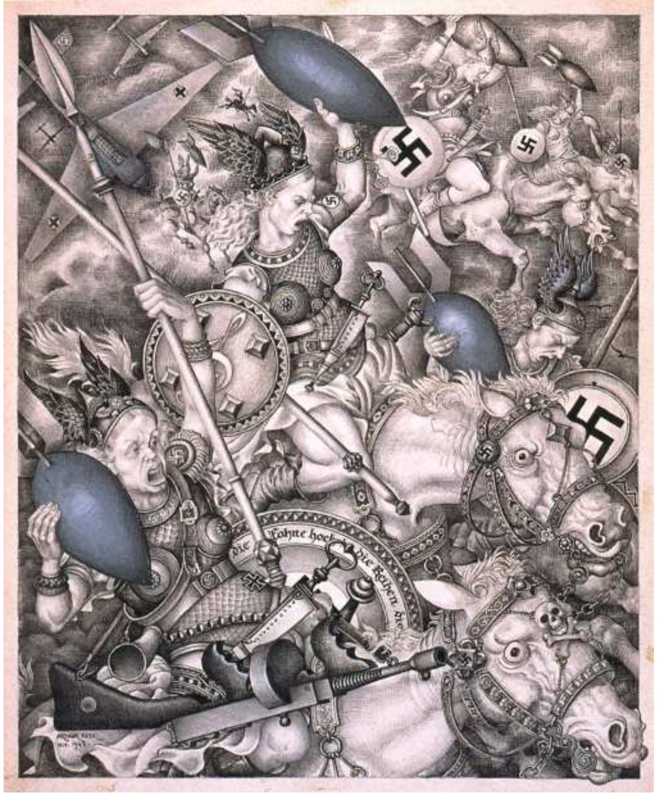

Die Fahne hoch die Reihen fest

Image source: wiki/The Arthur Szyk Society

the lovers of the human warriors. The Valkyrie can give us an insight into how people felt about war, battle and death.

Of the contemporary sources we have, is there a consistent picture of who and what a Valkyrie is, or does it change and evolve?

I don't think we can necessarily boil it down to a timeline. It was much more that different authors would have been expressing themselves differently. Sometimes a Valkyrie is kind of impersonal and it's very matter-of-fact that a Valkyrie comes and takes you. There's a really interesting little image in a poem where there's a king who's dying after a battle and the Valkyrie comes for him. He asks, "Why did you take me and not the other king I was fighting?" and she just replies, "Well, this was my decision." And she doesn't say sorry or anything. It's just very matter-of-fact. Some of the language of the poems talks about battles as the judgement of the Valkyrie. I think people would have had varying feelings about going into battle. When I was teaching Norse mythology I would always show my students the amazing scene in *Apocalypse Now* that uses the *Ride Of The Valkyries* from the Wagner opera as the helicopters approach this Vietnamese village. It shows each soldier and one is crossing himself, clearly bracing himself, while others are quite off-puttingly gung-ho and think it's fun. And then there's this one young man who's completely frozen. I always wanted to make the point that even if you have all of this bravado, once it comes to the actual reality, not everyone responds or behaves in the same way necessarily. I think the Valkyrie are a good way of looking at men's perspectives as well as women's.

The psychology of that is interesting. Is that connecting destiny and fate with ideas of home and associating women who maintain the home with life and death?

It's the same with the idea of the mother. There are all of these really lovely images of mothers and sons and mothers being really protective. Just really good mother and son relationships. And then there are these really evil, conniving matriarchs who see their sons or children as collateral. There's so much variety. It's difficult to generalise and I think that's one of the things that draws me to these sources - how complex and multifaceted they are.

In your book you get into how diverse these stories can be in how women are portrayed, being agents of their own story or having that agency taken away. They can be heroes and villains, flawed and angelic. Should we find that surprising?

Yes and no. I think we tend to think and talk about the Middle Ages as the Dark Ages. I remember when I was growing

▶

up and learning and finding it really surprising how much medieval people were able to understand about the world. The amount of things that they clearly knew, I don't think it's all that surprising. When I pause to think that they had really complex and stressful lives, nothing was really clear cut. It was a time of change and when there are all of these changes, when people are expanding and moving to new areas and there's violence and so on, some people come out as winners who are really resilient and some people might not do as well with that situation. I don't think there's any coincidence that the stories that they told each other are full of drama and complexity.

You mention early in your book some stories that involve the relationship between a Valkyrie and marriage, representing a loss of independence. Does this tell us something about the lives of women in this era?

It's astonishing that they have this idea that there's a freedom of movement and you can gallop around on your horse in the sky and go to different battles. There's one poem that depicts Valkyrie as having a bird shape, but at any rate they fly and it's this ultimate image of independence and mobility. In one legend Odin curses a Valkyrie by taking away this independence and dooming her to marriage. I like the idea that you would articulate this loss of independence. It's really astonishing. I don't think that the reality was that marriage was some terrible thing for women, but the idea that they had this figure who was so free, I think it's more of a fantasy and their lives play out very differently. The Valkyrie who gets doomed to marriage ends up having a terrible life and gets into this love quadrangle, and she gets double-crossed and tricked into marrying this man who conceals his identity. That's the story that's told in Wagner's *Ring*, for example, and everyone dies at the end of the story because they're all taking revenge on each other.

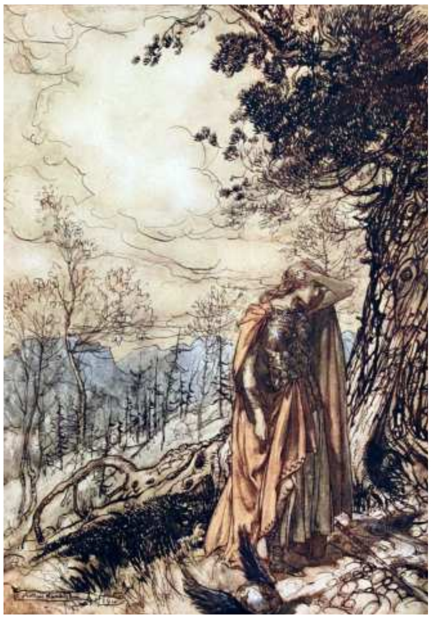


Image source: wiki/Arthur Rackham

How does the depiction of the Valkyrie in later romantic art differ from how Nordic cultures would have depicted and thought of them in the Viking era?

Some of them are obviously extremely romantic and not particularly critical of the role a Valkyrie might play in war, for example. The Arthur Rackham images are pretty interesting in that they convey some of the scary aspects of the Valkyrie. I think these images tell you so much about the people who made them confront the same themes. The Valkyrie are a way of dealing with themes like violence, war, death and so on, but also female independence and autonomy. I think there are extremely varied interpretations. Then you look at something like the *Thor* comics or something like that, you get a really simplified (both morally and in terms of narrative complexity) version of Valkyrie. I suppose that tells you something about Hollywood blockbusters and superhero films and that there isn't really a lot of room for moral complexity or ambivalence. A study of the depiction of Valkyrie from the 19th to 21st century in culture would be an interesting theme to go into. Maybe that's my next book! ○

DARK LESSONS

Would the sagas have been heard as parables for medieval life?

The stories of the sagas that have survived from the Viking era have many common tales and sometimes common themes, but would the people who heard them at the time have been hearing them as parables, similar to *Bible* stories? We asked Dr Friðriksdóttir…

"Some of the stories, I'm not sure if they were explicitly parables, but they would've made people ask questions," she says. "Sometimes the different poems have the same plot and characters, but in one poem the same character is depicted in a more negative or positive way than the other ones. That probably tells you about how the author felt about that character and their decisions."

One poem sprang to her mind, however, in terms of tales that might have had an impact on the mindset of women at the time. "There's this one poem… where the god Freyr sees this young woman (Gerd) and he wants her immediately and he sends his servant to woo her."

His approach is not appreciated, but after violent threats she's forced to relent. "I suppose if you align with the god's point of view she was very silly to resist him in the beginning. But if you see it from her point of view this guy turns up and starts threatening her unless she submits, and it wasn't until fairly recently that the poem was interpreted from her point of view. If you were a young woman and this poem was recited in your household you would've understood what that meant, that you were supposed to be submissive."

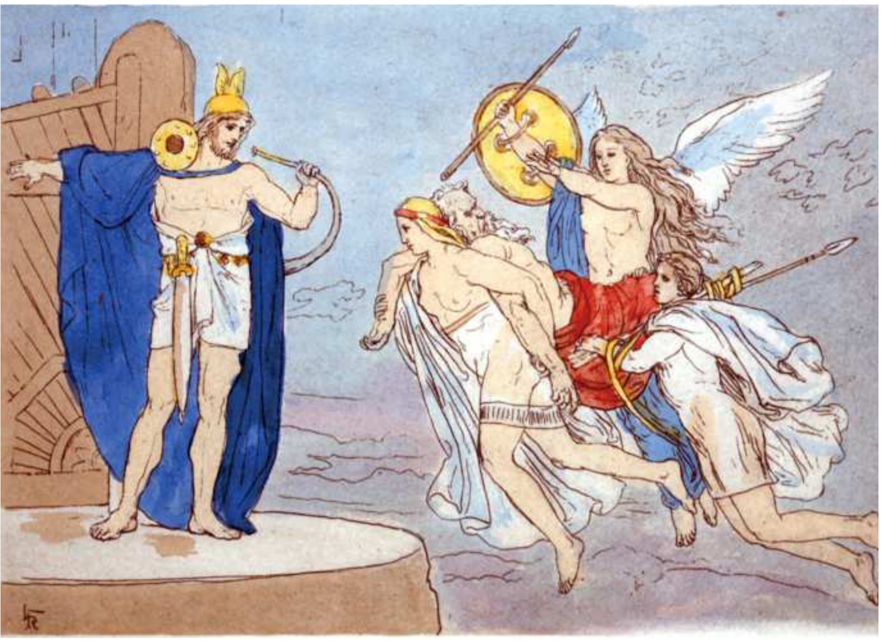
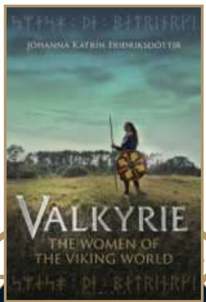


Image source: wiki/Lorenz Frølich

TOP The tale of the Valkyrie Brunhilde having her independence stripped and being forced into marriage gives us an insight into societal attitudes in Norse culture

ABOVE As well as deciding who lived and died in battle, Valkyrie were said to take the slain to Valhalla



Valkyrie: The Women Of The Viking World **by Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir is available now from Bloomsbury**

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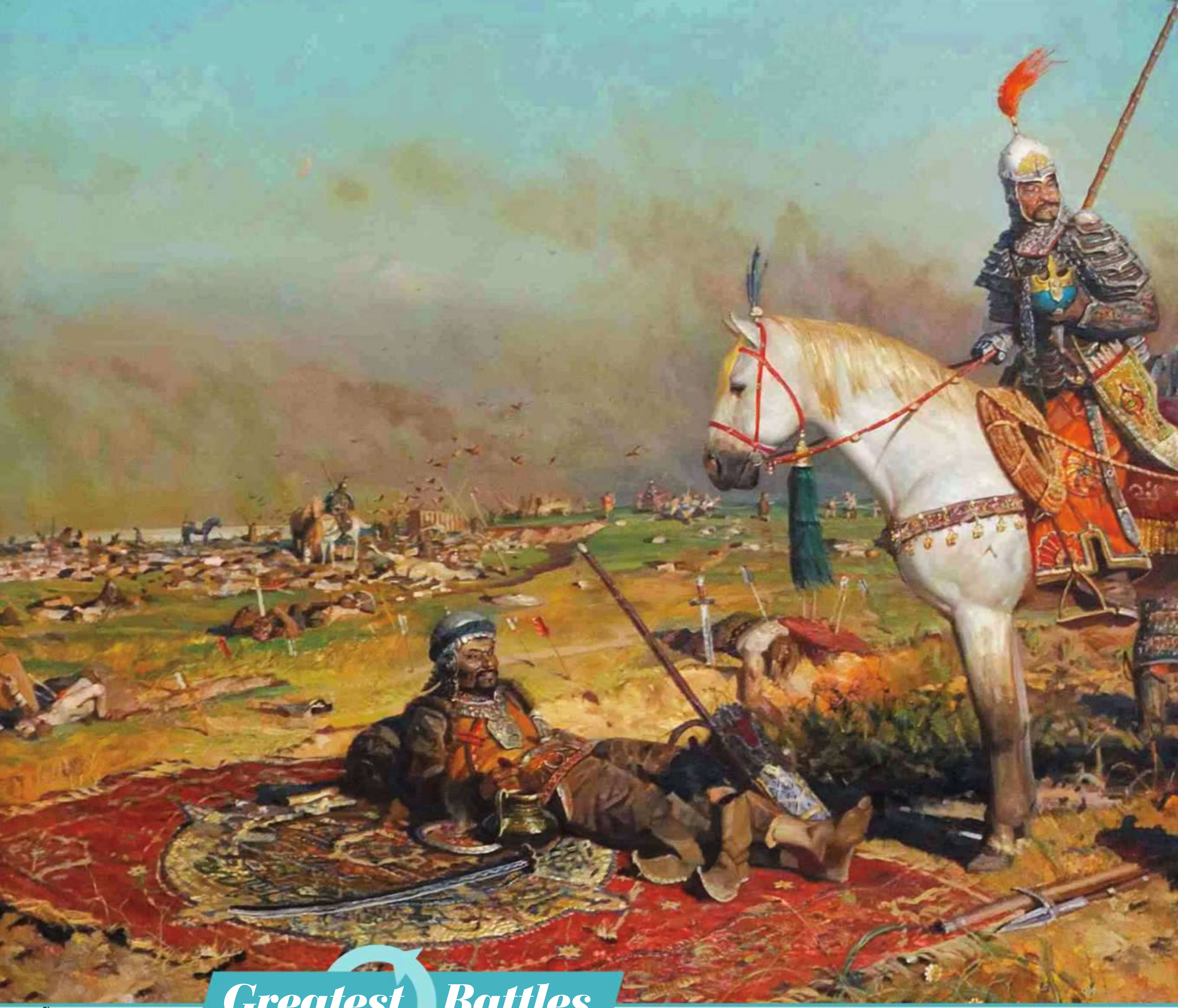


Greatest Battles

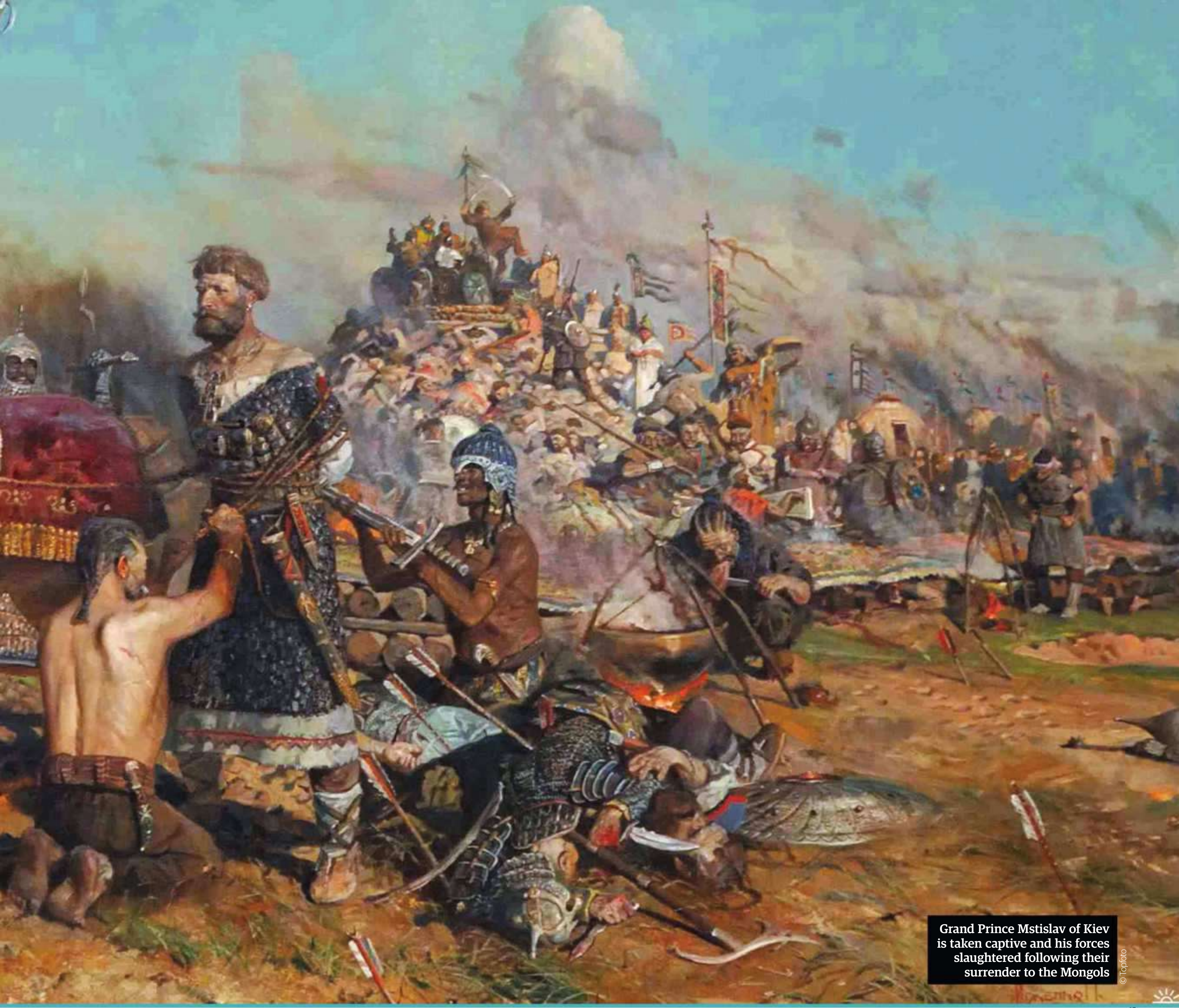
BATTLE OF KALKA RIVER

RUSSIA, 31 MAY 1223

Written by Marc G DeSantis

The figure of Genghis Khan of the Mongols looms like a colossus over the whole history of the Middle Ages, in both the east and west. With an army that displayed unsurpassed mobility and tight coordination, he established one of the largest land empires ever. His empire also proved durable, being able to survive his death and division among his heirs for some two centuries or more in places.

Genghis' beginnings hardly boded well for the future world conqueror. Born around 1162 and called Temujin in his youth, at the age of 12 he became the head of his household when his father was slain by rival Tatars. His father's erstwhile Mongol supporters would not consent to follow a boy, and his family, consisting of his mother and his brothers, experienced hard times. For safety they hid in the



Grand Prince Mstislav of Kiev is taken captive and his forces slaughtered following their surrender to the Mongols

© Topfoto

mountains. His early life was extremely difficult, but it toughened him.

Temujin allied himself with Togrul, khan of the Keraits, and with him took revenge on those who had killed his father, ruthlessly crushing his blood enemies, the Tatars. Eventually he and Togrul quarrelled and Temujin was driven far away, with just a handful of his followers remaining. The powerful coalition that the Keraits had put together, however, soon disintegrated and Temujin, now calling himself Genghis, returned for a rematch. He smashed the Keraits and Togrul fled.

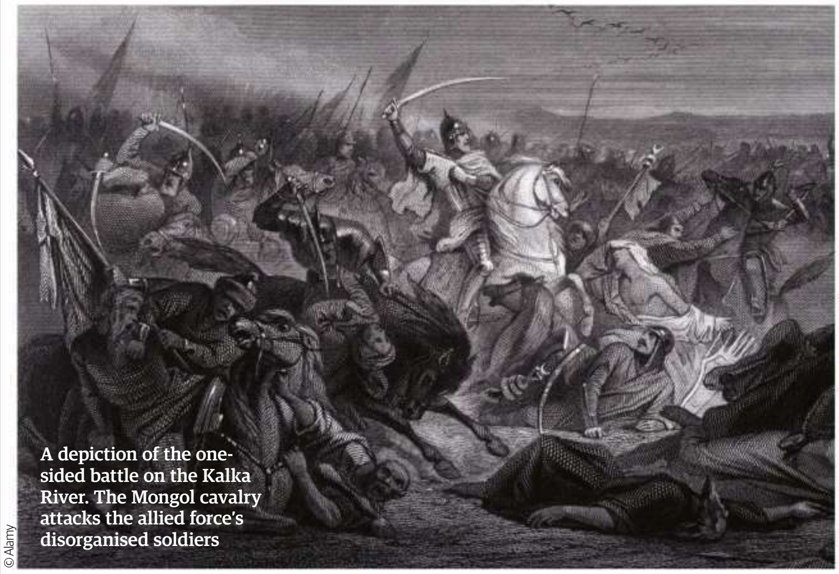
Genghis methodically set about bringing all of the tribes of the Mongolian steppes under his rule. In 1206 he held a great assembly, or kuriltai, where he was declared the supreme khan of all the Turkic and Mongolian peoples.

After crushing the Qara Khitai in the west, Genghis mounted a major invasion of the Islamic world. His first target was the wealthy Central Asian state of Khwarezm in Transoxania. Using the murder of Mongol merchants and ambassadors as a pretext, Genghis invaded in 1219. Cities were taken by the Mongols one after another, and their inhabitants savagely butchered. The cities were then set alight.

It was the same story as the Mongols continued their march into modern-day Afghanistan and eastern Iran. The Mongols were especially adept at using terror as a weapon against their enemies. The sheer fright they induced in others as a result of their deliberate terror tactics often prevented further effective resistance from developing against them. There's good reason for Genghis' reputation as a bloody-handed destroyer. An English monk, Matthew Paris, later wrote harshly of the Mongols: "They are of the nature of beasts... they thirst after and drink blood."

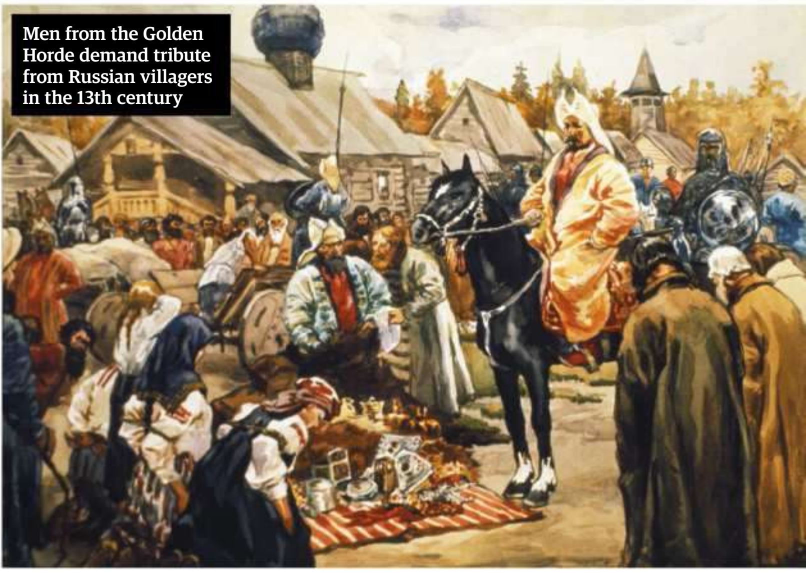
THE INVASION OF MEDIEVAL RUSSIA

Other lands would soon know the unspeakable cruelties of a Mongol invasion. Northern India was brutally attacked, and by 1223 a powerful Mongol army had appeared on Russia's frontier to conduct a massive reconnaissance raid against Europe. The Russia that the Mongols attacked was a far cry from the giant empire of the tsars it would later become. The Russian state had gotten its start in the 8th century CE with the settlement of the Varangian Rus – Scandinavian Vikings who used the numerous rivers of western Russia



A depiction of the one-sided battle on the Kalka River. The Mongol cavalry attacks the allied force's disorganised soldiers

© Alamy



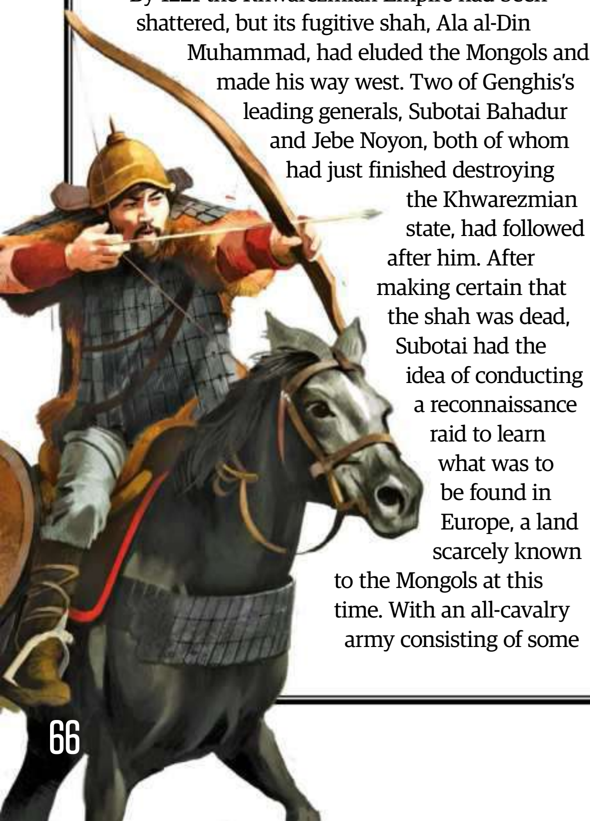
Men from the Golden Horde demand tribute from Russian villagers in the 13th century

© Getty Images

as highways to travel to and conduct trade with Byzantium far to the south. The Rus eventually put down roots, with one Northman, Rurik, and his two brothers becoming overlords of the Slavic tribes in the region. The Rus thus bequeathed their name to what would become Russia.

In the north, the foremost Russian city was Novgorod. In the south, it was Kiev. The Scandinavian Varangians became Slavicised as they intermarried with the local tribal peoples. Towards the end of the 9th century, the pagan Russians started converting to Orthodox Christianity under the tutelage of Byzantine missionaries. Prince Vladimir I of Kiev was baptised a Christian in 988 and made his people convert to the new faith. This earliest Russian state, that of Kievan Russia, would develop steadily over the next few centuries, expanding but also remaining weakened by divisions among its leading princes, who regularly feuded among themselves.

By 1221 the Khwarezmian Empire had been shattered, but its fugitive shah, Ala al-Din Muhammad, had eluded the Mongols and made his way west. Two of Genghis's leading generals, Subotai Bahadur and Jebe Noyon, both of whom had just finished destroying the Khwarezmian state, had followed after him. After making certain that the shah was dead, Subotai had the idea of conducting a reconnaissance raid to learn what was to be found in Europe, a land scarcely known to the Mongols at this time. With an all-cavalry army consisting of some 20,000 riders, Subotai and Jebe rode northward through the Caucasus. What followed would become the greatest cavalry ride of all time.



Years later, in 1247, Giovanni di Plano Carpini, a Franciscan monk, would travel to the distant Mongol court. He concluded that Subotai was "a soldier without weakness". The Mongols themselves knew him as 'Subotai the Unfailing'. It would later be said of Subotai, after his death at the age of 73 in 1248, that in his long military career he had conquered 32 nations and had been victorious in some 75 pitched battles. These are astonishing achievements, and they highlight the quality of the general to whom Genghis had entrusted the western campaign. He had chosen his man well: Subotai was not just an adept military leader, he was also famously loyal to the Great Khan, once saying to his master, "As felt protects from the wind, so I will ward off your enemies."

> "Of the 80,000-strong Russian and Kipchaq army, only 20,00 were trained to fight"

Genghis, a shrewd judge of ability, was also not above taking a former enemy into his service when he saw talent in him. Jebe, Subotai's co-commander on the raid, was a member of the Yesut tribe of Mongols, and had earlier battled his new master during the tribal wars that saw Genghis, then still known as Temujin, cement his authority over all of the Mongol peoples. In one encounter, Jebe had even managed to bring down Genghis's own horse. When he was later captured, he anticipated nothing more than being put to death. Instead, Jebe was taken into Genghis's service and became one of the Great Khan's highest-ranking generals.

The ride began in February 1221 with Subotai circling his army around the southern end of the Caspian Sea. After crushing the Christian Kingdom of Georgia that year, the following year Subotai was confronted by a coalition of peoples in the Caucasus, including Alans, Iasians and Kosogians, which sought to block his passage. The coalition was led by the Kipchaqs, a Turkic people who dominated the steppes of what is today southern Russia and Ukraine. Subotai was trapped in the mountains on terrain unsuited to Mongol cavalry tactics. Destruction loomed until he bribed the Kipchaqs to leave, and once they'd departed he annihilated the abandoned Caucasians. The Mongols then moved on to the Ukrainian steppe, hard on the heels of the unsuspecting Kipchaqs, and smashed their army in a battle near the Don River then sacked the city of Astrakhan.

After spending the winter of 1222-23 out on the steppe north of Crimea conducting reconnaissance of the region, Subotai began to advance westward in earnest, pushing along the Dniester River towards the Russian heartland, slaughtering all in his path. The frightened Kipchaqs warned the Russians that if they did not receive Russian aid then they might very well be forced, by dire circumstances, to join with the Mongols. The Russians had long suffered raids by the Kipchaqs, who were themselves steppe nomads with a fondness for preying upon the settled peoples around them, and so for much of the past year they had steadfastly refused the entreaties of the Kipchaqs. Now, however, with the Mongols threatening both peoples, an alliance to fight the common enemy was made, and preparations for a joint war began.

Around 18 Russian princes, together with the Kipchaqs, formed a large army of some 80,000 men, and together marched eastward to confront the invaders. Among those taking part in the expedition were Mstislav Romanovich, Grand Prince of Kiev; Daniil Romanovich, Prince of Volhynia; and Prince Mstislav of Galicia, plus a number of other princes. They were joined on the expedition by the Kipchaqs under Khan Koten, who was also the father-in-law of Mstislav of Galicia. Worryingly, just 20,000 of the troops they led were properly armed and trained to fight.

While the bulk of the Mongol army now moved east, heading away from Russia, a small rearguard of 1,000 Mongol horsemen was left behind to delay the Russian-Kipchaq advance. Control over the huge allied army was less than ideal. Assembling at the Dnieper River on 22 May 1223, the Russian crossing was severely hindered by the distrustful

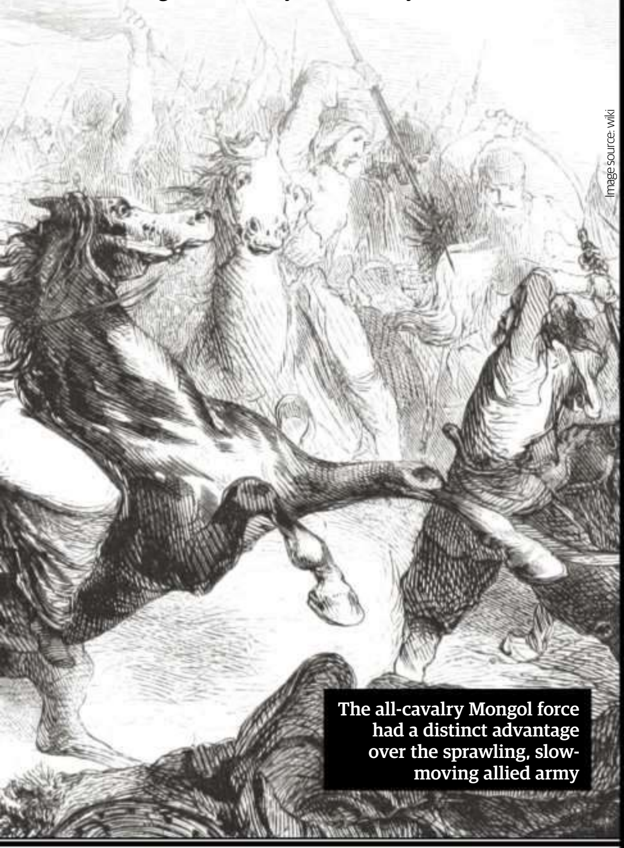


Image source: wiki

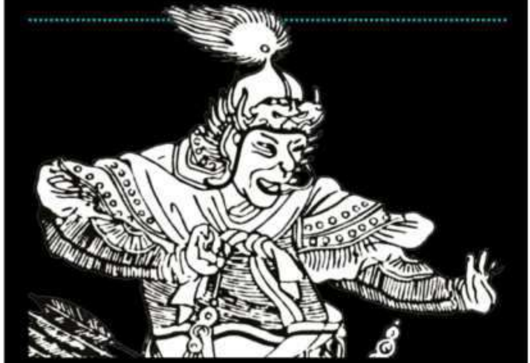
The all-cavalry Mongol force had a distinct advantage over the sprawling, slow-moving allied army

MONGOLS

TOTAL

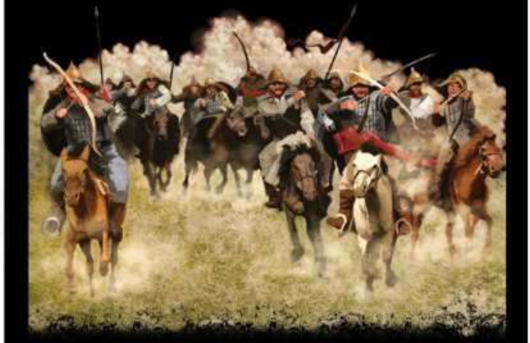
20,000

ALL CAVALRY



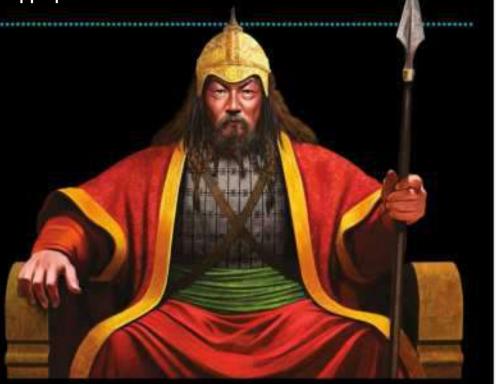
SUBOTAI

Known as 'Subotai the Unfailing' by the Mongols, the illiterate Subotai was Genghis Khan's greatest and most trusted general. His 8,850km cavalry raid around the Caspian, through eastern Europe and back to Asia, over three years, is the longest cavalry ride of all time.



MONGOL CAVALRYMEN

Stellar horsemen, Mongol cavalrymen combined the power of their bows with the unsurpassed mobility of their hardy steppe ponies.



GENGHIS KHAN

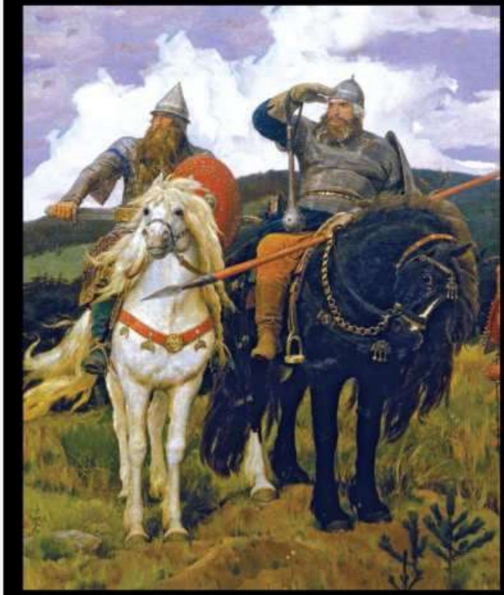
The youth known as Temujin grew up to become the greatest and most infamous conqueror in history. In 1206, at a great steppe nomad assembly, or kuriltai, he was proclaimed the ruler of 'all the tribes who live in felt tents'.

RUSSIANS

TOTAL

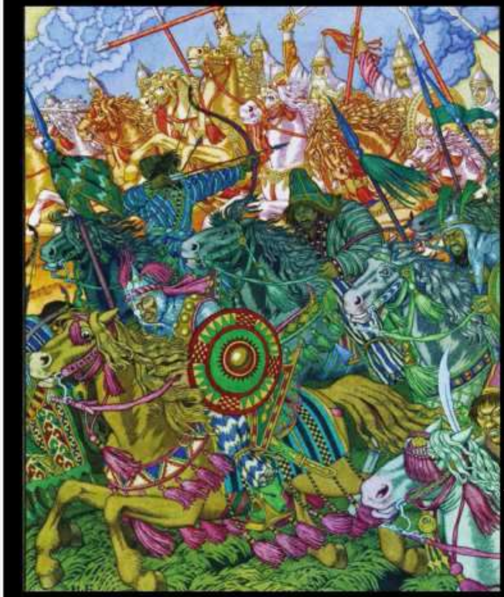
80,000

CAVALRY AND INFANTRY



RUSSIAN CAVALRY

The hard core of every Russian prince's army at Kalka was his druzhina bodyguard of heavy cavalry. They were equipped much like European knights, with swords, maces, axes, lances and mail armour.



3x Image source: wiki

KIPCHAQS

The Kipchaqs, also known as Cumans, were a Turkic people who dominated the Eurasian steppe prior to the Mongol invasion of Russia. In 1223 they joined the Russians in the disastrous Battle of the Kalka River against the Mongols.

princes' bickering over who should be the supreme commander of the combined army. In many ways the host was a collection of several smaller armies, not a single, united force. The heavily outnumbered Mongol rearguard was destroyed once the Russians had at last crossed, but only after it had inflicted significant casualties with its deadly archery.

Subotai and Jebe were in fact drawing the Russians ever further from the Dnieper, luring them onto territory they had already scouted. They were engaged in a false strategic retreat. It was the Mongols' preference to destroy an enemy's field armies outside of its frontiers and far away from any fortified strongholds, before plunging deep into the defenceless territory. They also knew that the allied army lacked a supreme commander, and so its major units would inevitably become separated as some moved ahead faster than others. Subotai allowed them small, meaningless victories against token forces to encourage them to continue the chase. This lasted for nine days after the crossing of the Dnieper and the allied army, as the Mongols expected, did indeed become dangerously attenuated over the course of the march, stretching out some 80km from nose to tail.

DISASTER AT THE KALKA RIVER

On 31 May 1223 Subotai chose to make his stand on the small Kalka River, in what is today Ukraine. Showing his military flexibility, he decided not to begin the battle with the showers of arrows launched by horse archers, as was typical practice among the Mongols, but instead sent in his heavy armoured cavalry first. This cavalry charge proved decisive. The Mongols immediately engaged the Kipchaqs in close combat and soon ran them off. The armoured cavalrymen then routed the Russians from the Principality of Volhynia.

The unengaged Russians of Galicia saw what was happening and tried to form a battle line, but they were carried away by the tide of fleeing Kipchaqs and Russians that once formed the advance guard. The men of Chernigov were caught in the midst of their own river crossing and were also carried away by fleeing allied troops. Elsewhere, Prince Oleg of Kursk put his men into a semblance of order, but these too were defeated by the Mongols.

The 10,000 men of Kiev under Prince Mstislav Romanovich circled their wagons and defended themselves well for several days. Having run out of drinking water on the steppe, they surrendered.

The Battle of the Kalka River was over, but the misery for the Russians was not yet at an end. The Mongols killed many of the capitulating Kievans and took the rest captive. Keeping to the strict letter of his word, Subotai saw to it that the Russian aristocrats' blood was not spilled. Instead they were suffocated beneath wooden planks while Mongols feasted atop them. All told, it was reported that some 90 per cent of the allied army met its end by the Kalka. Of the 18 Russian princes thought to have participated, 12 lost their lives. Subotai and Jebe's Mongols suffered minimal losses.

31 MAY 1223

How the heavily outnumbered Mongols crushed the combined Russian and Kipchaq forces

01 The allies arrive

After a nine-day march from the Dnieper River, the combined army of the Russian princes and Kipchaqs arrives at the Kalka River on 31 May 1223. Little do they suspect that Subotai has deliberately lured them away from the Dnieper, by means of a false retreat, expecting that the divisions of the large army will become dispersed as it marches.

02 River crossing

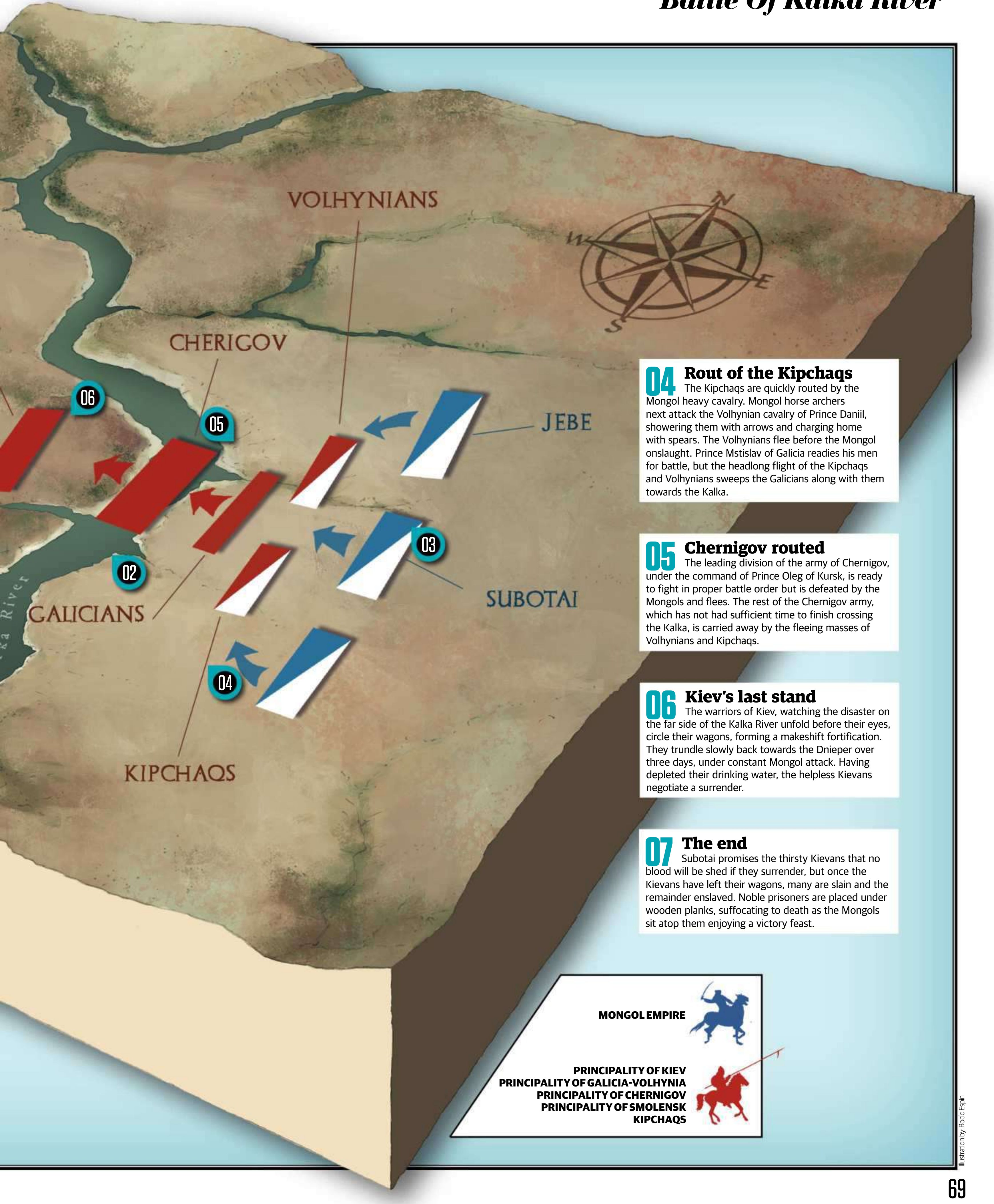
The Kipchaqs, heading east, cross the Kalka, followed by the Volhynian cavalry and the men of Galicia. The troops of Chernigov fall behind, crossing the river only slowly. The men of Kiev at this time do not attempt to cross at all.

03 Subotai Strikes

Seeing that the major elements of the allied army have become widely separated, Subotai orders a general attack. The allies are unready for the assault. There is no overall commander to direct them and they have little idea what the Mongols are up to. In a departure from usual Mongol tactics, Subotai sends in his heavy armoured cavalry first, instead of leading the assault with horse archers.

A Mongol's iron helmet dating from the 12th century, at the time of the Golden Horde

© Alamy


VOLHYNIANS
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ka River
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KIPCHAQS
MONGOL EMPIRE
PRINCIPALITY OF KIEV
PRINCIPALITY OF GALICIA-VOLHYNIA
PRINCIPALITY OF CHERNIGOV
PRINCIPALITY OF SMOLENSK
KIPCHAQS

04 Rout of the Kipchaqs

The Kipchaqs are quickly routed by the Mongol heavy cavalry. Mongol horse archers next attack the Volhynian cavalry of Prince Daniil, showering them with arrows and charging home with spears. The Volhynians flee before the Mongol onslaught. Prince Mstislav of Galicia readies his men for battle, but the headlong flight of the Kipchaqs and Volhynians sweeps the Galicians along with them towards the Kalka.

05 Chernigov routed

The leading division of the army of Chernigov, under the command of Prince Oleg of Kursk, is ready to fight in proper battle order but is defeated by the Mongols and flees. The rest of the Chernigov army, which has not had sufficient time to finish crossing the Kalka, is carried away by the fleeing masses of Volhynians and Kipchaqs.

06 Kiev's last stand

The warriors of Kiev, watching the disaster on the far side of the Kalka River unfold before their eyes, circle their wagons, forming a makeshift fortification. They trundle slowly back towards the Dnieper over three days, under constant Mongol attack. Having depleted their drinking water, the helpless Kievans negotiate a surrender.

07 The end

Subotai promises the thirsty Kievans that no blood will be shed if they surrender, but once the Kievans have left their wagons, many are slain and the remainder enslaved. Noble prisoners are placed under wooden planks, suffocating to death as the Mongols sit atop them enjoying a victory feast.

Illustration by Rocio Espin

The 'What If' Newspaper

Spain | **Interview by Callum McKelvie** | **1939**

REPUBLICANS WIN SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Against all odds, Republican forces in Spain have declared victory after defeating the Nationalist onslaught

EXCLUSIVE Interview With

Image source: Ione Saizar

PAUL PRESTON

Sir Paul Preston is Professor of International History at the London School of Economics and specialises in 20th century Spain. Among his many books are *Franco: A Biography* (1993); *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution, Revenge* (2006); *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition And Extermination In Twentieth-Century Spain* (2012) and *A People Betrayed* (2020).

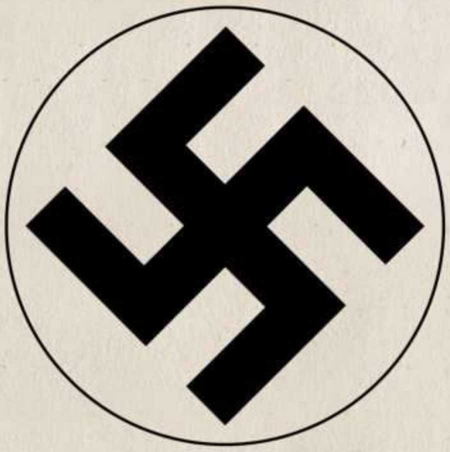
What occurred prior to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936?
The origins of the Spanish Civil War went back a long way. Spain under the Borbón monarchy was an extremely unequal society and a predominantly agrarian one, in which the politics of the nation had been run largely in the interests of the landowners. First, between 1923 and 1930, there was a dictatorship that failed to resolve any of the monarchy's problems and this was followed, between the beginning of 1930 and April 1931, by an attempt to get back to how things had been under the disastrously failed monarchy. On 4 April 1931 the democratic Second Republic was founded. This was run by a coalition of socialists and what in Spain are called Republicans, which simply means they were not monarchists but liberals in favour of a republic. This moderate coalition introduced a series of reforms, including agrarian reform, which infuriated the right. There was

A flamethrowing tank during the war

Image source: wiki/Biblioteca Virtual de Defensa

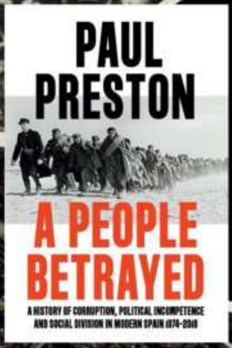
NO WAR WITH GERMANY?

Contrary to popular belief, it now seems that war with Germany is not an inevitability. Spain has allied itself with Britain and France to create a combined democratic front which appears to have slowed down the progress of the German war machine.



Francoist cadets swearing allegiance in a bombed Alcázar

© Getty Images



PAUL PRESTON

A PEOPLE BETRAYED

A HISTORY OF CORRUPTION, POLITICAL INCOMPETENCE AND SOCIAL DIVISION IN MODERN SPAIN 1874–2018

Paul Preston's new book *A People Betrayed* is out now from William Collins

Aerial photo of the bombing of Barcelona

Image source: wiki/Italian Airforce

Churchill's book *Step By Step* outlines his approach to the Spanish Civil War

© Getty Images

> **"Winston Churchill moved from supporting Franco to supporting the Republic"**

General Franco, leader of the Nationalist forces

Image source: wiki/Biblioteca Virtual de Defensa

a military coup in August of 1932, which was unsuccessful but made the conspirators determined that next time they wouldn't fail.

Elections were held in November 1933 which brought in a right-wing government that subsequently dismantled all of the reforms of the previous two years. Hatred had been building on both sides and led in October 1934 to an uprising of miners in the northern province of Asturias, which was put down by the military with incredible savagery. In February 1936, there were further elections and tensions were running high. The left was convinced that the only way forward, legally, was to use their numerical superiority to win elections and get control of the apparatus of the state. The conclusion was drawn by the right that if the left achieved this they would never win and therefore the only answer for them was a military coup. That took place on the evening of 17 July 1936.

What were some of the key events in the civil war?

The most important events were, firstly, the decision of the British and French governments to follow a policy of non-intervention. This meant that the two big democracies refused to help their sister democracy and therefore deprived the Republic of the means of defending itself. It was unable to buy arms legally and so was forced to use unscrupulous private arms dealers. The second issue was that Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy saw the Spanish Civil War as a terrific opportunity to alter the international balance of power and focused on giving help to General Franco. Then, because Franco was making fast progress, the Soviet Union began to panic. A key part of Soviet foreign policy at that time was to try to encircle Germany, which primarily meant having a strong alliance with France. That meant not frightening the French right. However, the Soviets became concerned that if Franco were to win it would see three fascist states surrounding France: Germany, Italy and a fascist Spain, possibly tipping the internal balance in France. So, somewhat reluctantly, the Soviet Union made the decision to help the Republic. This move was interpreted by Franco, and also in London, as proof that the Soviet Union wanted to establish a Soviet Spain, which was absolutely untrue. One of the consequences of Soviet aid was that while it gave the Republic enough support to fight on, it consolidated the decision of the British and the French not to help the Second Republic.

Why did the Nationalists ultimately emerge victorious?

As I've already explained, the reason why Franco won was because the Republicans were not supported by Britain and France. However, there's also the issue that Franco commanded an army over which he had total discipline, and he imposed this on the territory they conquered, murdering over 150,000 people. In contrast the Republic more or less remained a democracy, and within that democracy you had all kinds of disputes over how best to carry out the war efforts. So within the Republic there was a very powerful anarchist movement and a significantly less powerful, but nonetheless influential, Trotskyist movement, both of whom wanted to begin a kind of revolutionary war. However, the socialists, communists and the liberal Republicans all preferred a conventional war effort. So, there's this big conflict within the Republican zone.

What was Spain like after the war under the Nationalist regime?

Franco had made it clear that his objective in the war was to create the conditions for a dictatorship that would last as long as possible. You might almost say that he thought Hitler's view of the Thousand Year Reich was short-term thinking! Franco's military strategy was to go very slowly and to annihilate as many Republicans as possible. At the end of the war about a million people were placed in concentration camps and prisons, well into the middle of, and beyond, the 1940s. It was also a regime of plunder: the money, homes and property of Republicans were simply stolen. After the end of World War II it would have been impossible to do all this. It happened while the eyes of the rest of the world were looking in another direction. That first repression from 1939 to 1945 is an investment in terror. During the Franco years (he died in 1975 but the dictatorship continued until 1977) a kind of national brainwashing took place, which convinced many Spaniards that Franco was the national saviour who kept them from the horrors of Soviet communism. Over time, the dictatorship softened a little. I lived in Spain from the late 1960s into the first years of the 1970s and you

A Republican howitzer in the Spanish Civil War

Image source: wiki/Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe

were still very aware it was a dictatorship. There were Civil Guard, armed police on the streets. People I worked with were suddenly arrested for no apparent reason.

Were there any points during the war where the Republicans could've won?

Not really, no. The writing was on the wall really by the end of July 1936, when Germany and Italy had decided to help Franco, and Britain and France had decided not to help the Republic. Arguably, it's actually a miracle that the Republic continued to fight on for nearly three years. Now, having said that, how might things have been different? What if Britain and France had realised what Hitler and Mussolini were up to? But of course, they thought the policy of Hitler and Mussolini was anti-left. Policy makers were obsessed with the fear of the Soviet Union and in a way they almost thought that they could use Hitler as a kind of 'Rottweiler' to protect them from the Soviet Union.

What would Spain have looked like under Republican leadership?

If it had won, I think it's highly unlikely that there would have been communist leadership. There might have been a communist participation in a coalition but it would not have been a communist regime. Let's take the case of Winston Churchill. At the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, Churchill was fiercely in support of the military rebels. He put together a book, called *Step By Step*, containing his newspaper articles over this time. In it, you can trace how Churchill moved from support for Franco to support for the Republic, because he thought it would be better for the British Empire. Whereas Franco enacted the most savage repression, had the Republic been victorious, many, including Churchill, thought that it's leader Juan Negrín would go for a policy of national reconciliation.

How would this have affected the Second World War?

There's two ways of answering this. If Britain and France had supported the Republic, then I think there would not have been a Second World War, because that support would have ensured an early Republican victory and prevented the Axis powers changing the international balance of power in their favour. Now, the other hypothesis of what might have happened if the Spanish Civil War went the distance, as it did, but miraculously the Republic won? Well, what we do know from the fall of Catalonia in January of 1939 is that Negrín was desperate to keep the war effort going because he believed that Britain and France would finally wake up to the real threat of Germany and Italy. If, as Negrín hoped, World War II broke out before the end of the Spanish Civil War, then it would have made a huge difference since Republican Spain, which was fighting Germany and Italy already, would have been allies of Britain and France. Interestingly, of course, Hitler and Mussolini were very aware of this. Indeed, one of the reasons why Hitler held off from provoking war was because he wanted to make sure that Franco was in power before he took the big step.

WHO WAS FRANCISCO FRANCO?

Image source: wiki/Biblioteca Virtual de Defensia

Born in 1892, Francisco Franco initially wanted to follow his father and grandfather into a naval career but due to the academy being closed to cadets, he enrolled into an infantry academy instead. Despite graduating with below average grades, he was able to prove himself during an insurgency in Spanish-controlled Morocco. He stayed there for 14 years, earning a reputation as a more than capable soldier, and at 33 was made the youngest general in the Spanish military. The Second Republic saw Franco as a possible threat (a suspicion proved by his actions suppressing the revolt in Asturias). As the next leftist government took control, Franco was essentially banished to the Canary Islands. Key to the right-wing Spanish forces, it was arranged for Englishman Cecil Bebb (along with his friend Major Hugh Pollard and two female companions) to fly to the Canaries and collect Franco. From here he was taken to Tetuan in Spanish Morocco, where he was able to begin preparations for the coming war.

Image source: wiki/Branch of the National Union of Journalists (BNUJ)

ORWELL DECLARED WAR HERO

Journalist and author George Orwell has been declared a hero by the Spanish authorities and is to be made an honorary citizen. He is one of many British citizens who fought on the side of the victorious Republicans to be given such an honour.

Image source: Haynes/Retired LFB/CC BY-SA 4.0

LIFE IN THE BLITZ

Marking 80 years of the Blitz, Haynes' *The Blitz Operations Manual* celebrates the men and women who helped keep Britain safe

Between September 1940 and May 1941, German planes raged overhead and the streets of Britain were plunged into darkness. Residents were urged to 'Put that light out!' as a huge number of organisations worked to combat the threat and keep people safe. Despite lasting just over eight months, the Blitz still casts a long shadow. Even today, the phrase 'spirit of the Blitz' is used to describe a sense of patriotism, coming together and 'just getting on with it'.

The German bombing campaign was a huge operation and the response was a similarly vast undertaking. Volunteers worked alongside official institutions, undergoing rigorous training to respond to the attacks calmly and effectively. Every night for those eight months, ordinary men and women risked their lives.

The Blitz Operations Manual covers all aspects of the raids, from defence procedures to everyday life in the Blitz. There are plans detailing how to build an air raid shelter and descriptions of the evacuation process, all lavishly illustrated with fascinating colour and black and white photographs. In particular, the Haynes manual highlights the work done by civilians amidst the horrifying onslaught.

DECONTAMINATION SQUAD

Squads like these were trained by the City of London to deal with potential gas attacks. Fortunately, these never came but the government prepared by creating Gas Cleansing Centres and individuals trained to decontaminate the area in the event of an aerial mustard gas attack.

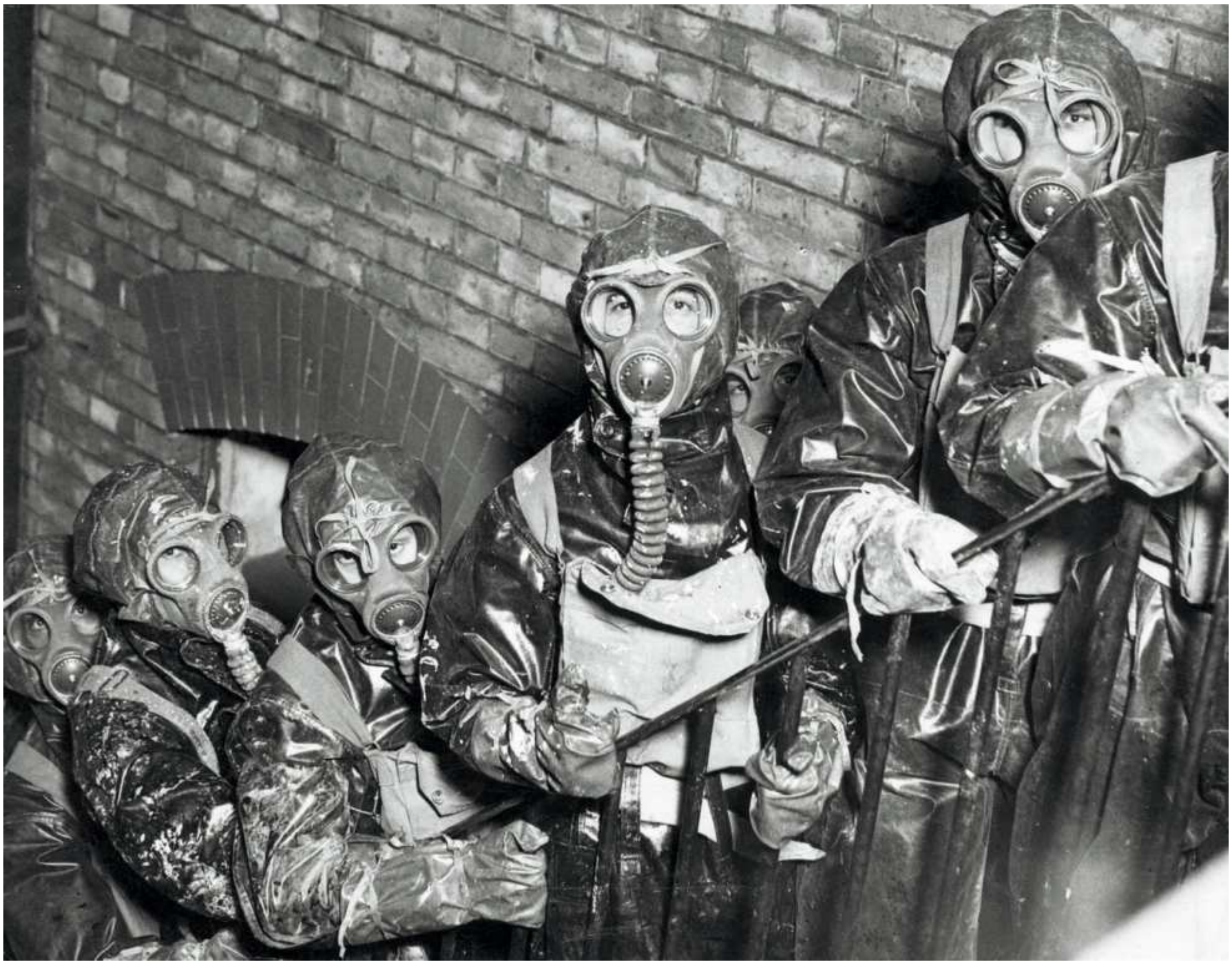


Image source: Keystone/Getty Images

POSTER FOR THE AUXILIARY FIRE SERVICE

Formed in 1938, London's Auxiliary Fire Service recruited those too young or too old to join the armed forces using posters such as this one. Its job was to assist fire brigades at local level during attacks by the Luftwaffe, but problems were often faced due to the differing equipment used by the organisations.

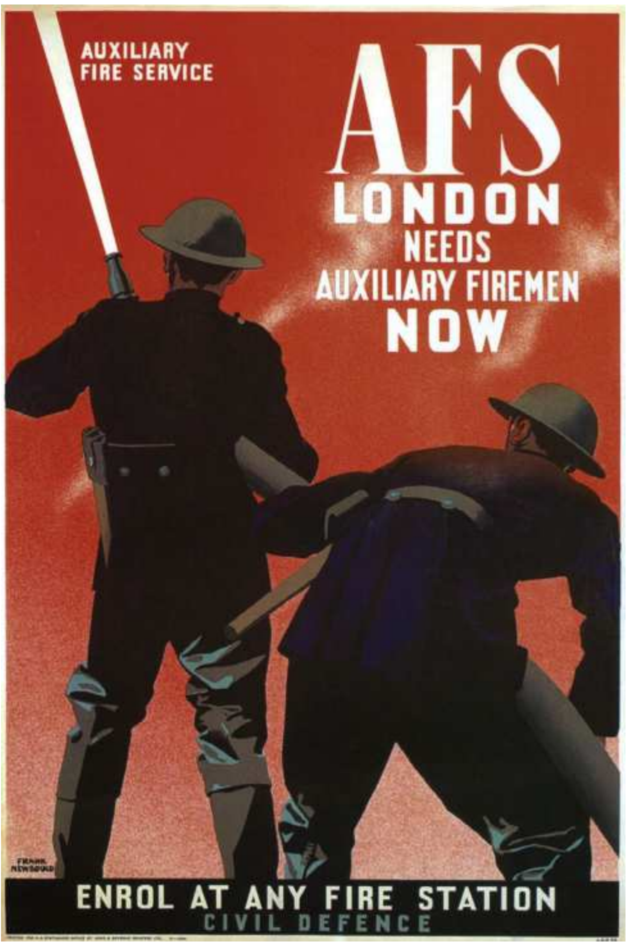

AUXILIARY
FIRE SERVICE
AFS
LONDON
NEEDS
AUXILIARY FIREMEN
NOW
FRANK NEWBOULD
ENROL AT ANY FIRE STATION
CIVIL DEFENCE

Image source: Haynes

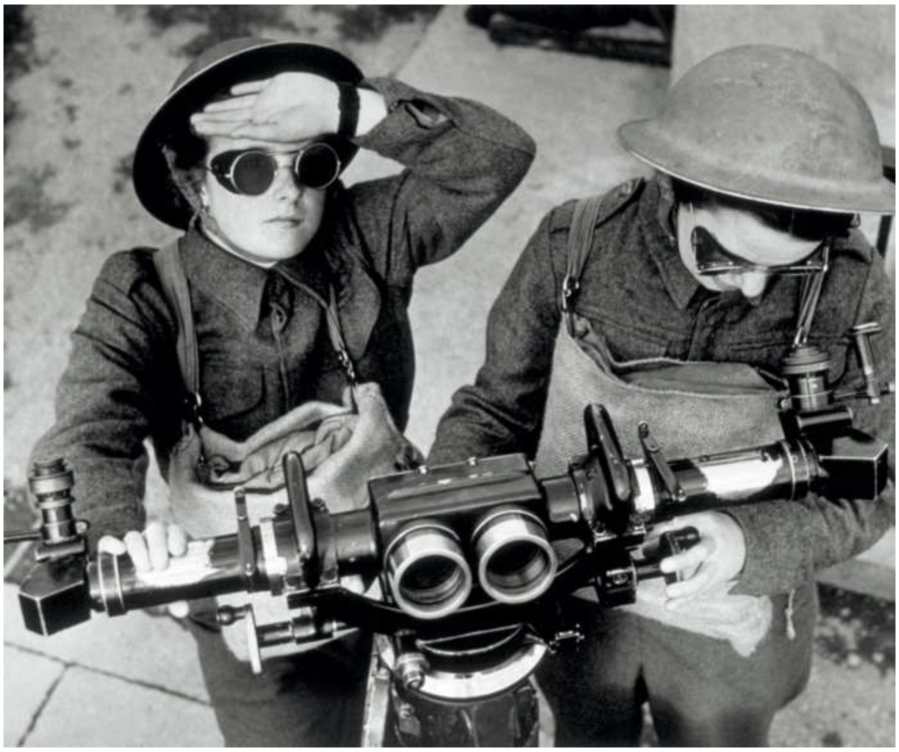


Image source: Getty/Fox Photos/Stringer

AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICES

Two members of the Auxiliary Territorial Services operate an anti-aircraft binocular gunsight used to spot enemy aircraft. The ATS was the women's branch of the British Army, and by 1941 had some 65,000 members.

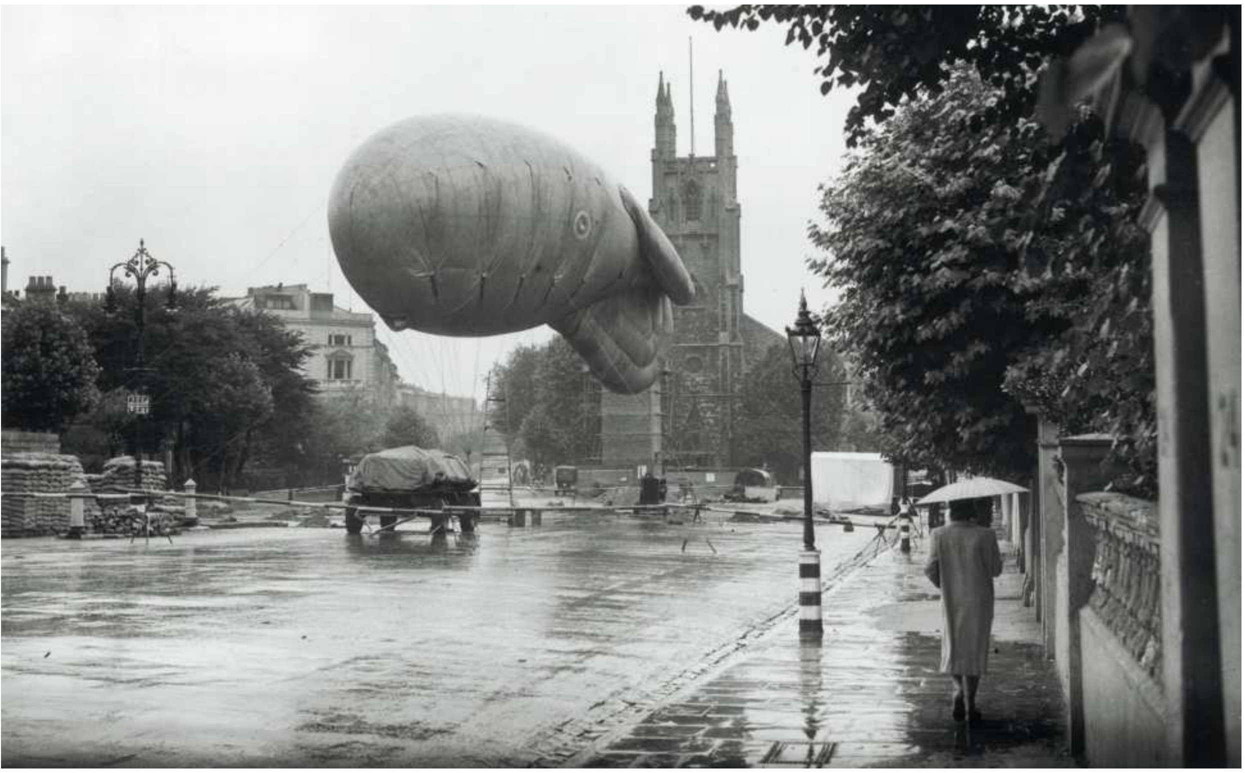


Image source: Getty/Fox Photos/Stringer

BARRAGE BALLOON AWAITS ELEVATION IN LONDON

◀ Barrage balloons were used to defend against enemy aircraft, essentially serving as a vast collision risk. Their effectiveness varied depending on the aircraft, proving relatively useful against dive bombers and V1 rockets but having little effect against high-flying bombers.

AUSTRALIAN AIR RAID POSTER

▼ The threat of air raids against Britain was not limited purely to its own shores, indeed many Commonwealth nations found themselves under attack as well. In the Pacific theatre Australia was attacked at least 97 times.

PHOTOGRAPH OF A GERMAN HEINKEL HE 111 OVER THE THAMES

▼ During development, this aircraft was disguised as a civil aircraft (due to restrictions placed on Germany at the end of World War 1) but it was always intended as a fast medium bomber. While effective during the early stage of the war, it was during the Battle of Britain that its weak defensive armaments were exposed.

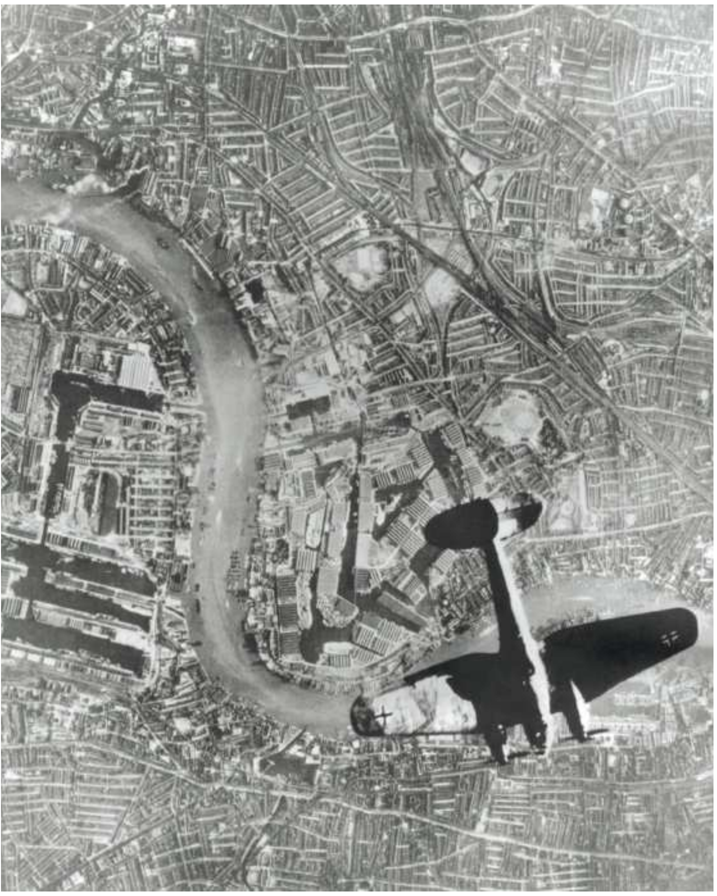


Image source: Haynes/Shutterstock

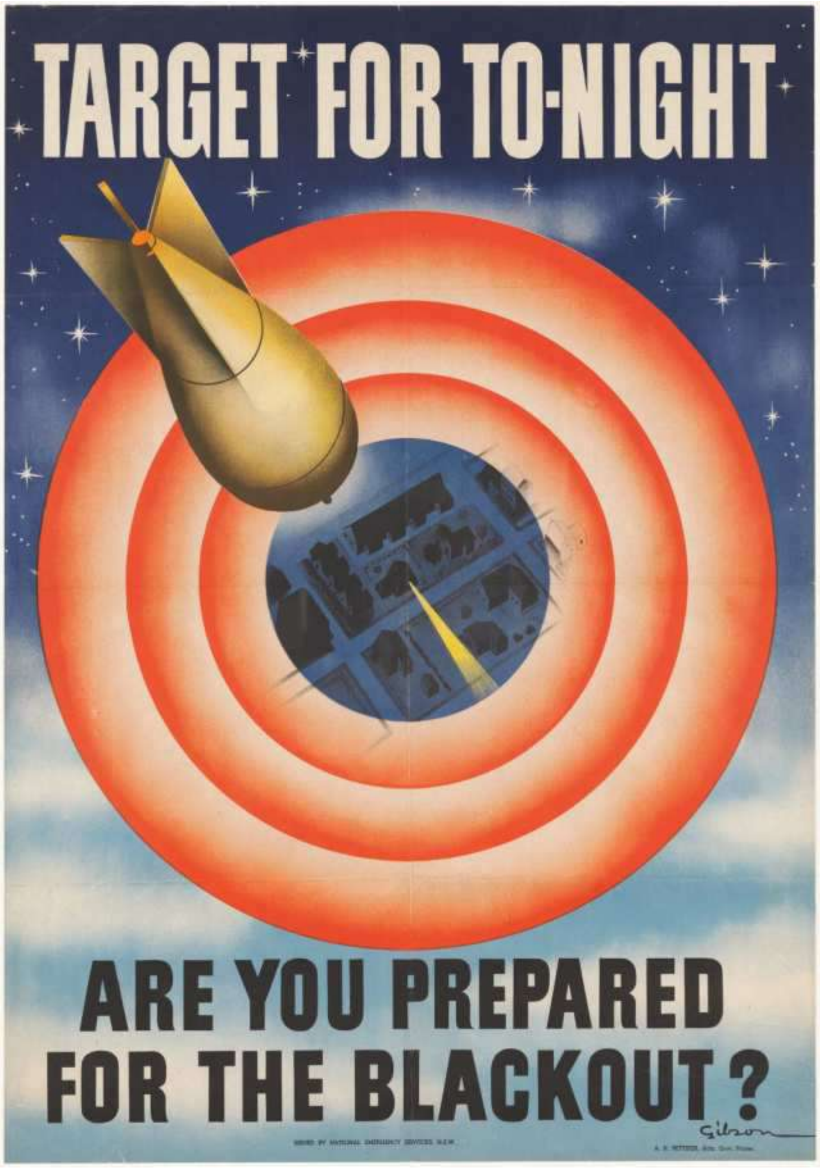
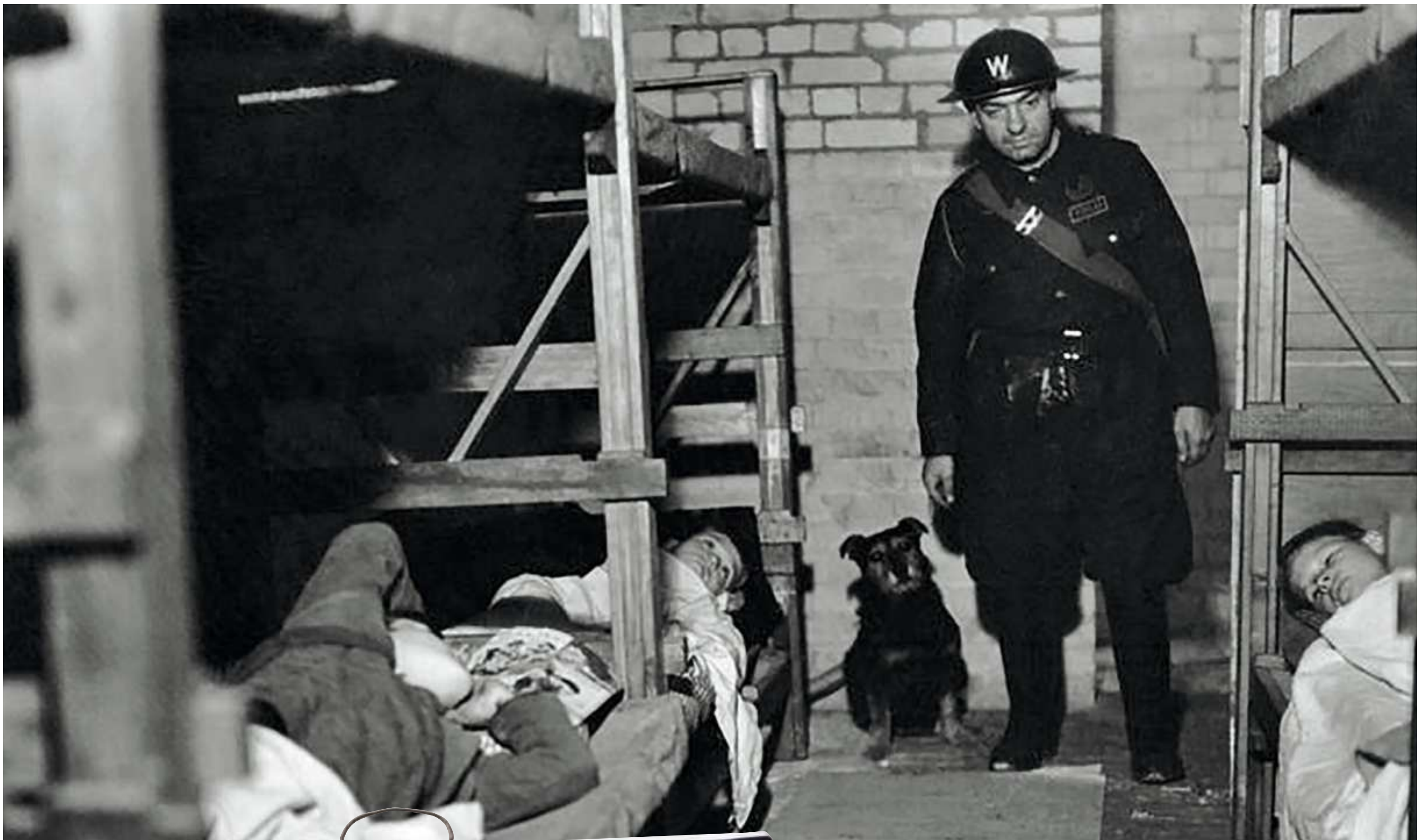

TARGET FOR TO-NIGHT
ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE BLACKOUT?
ISSUED BY NATIONAL EMERGENCY SERVICES N.S.W.
Gilson

Image source: Haynes



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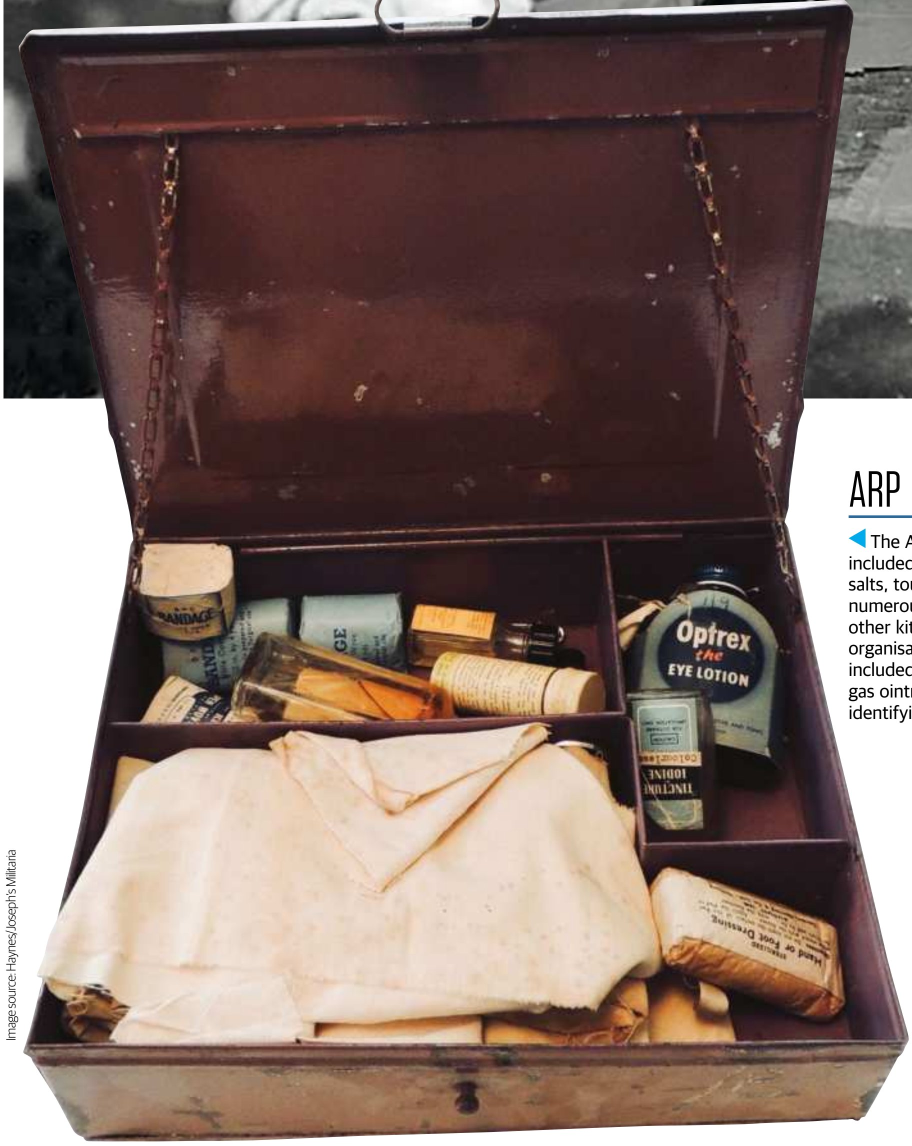

BANDAGE
Optrex
the
EYE LOTION
TINCTURE
IODINE
Colourless
Hand or Foot Dressing

Image source: Haynes/Joseph's Militaria

ARP MEDICAL KIT

◀ The Air Raid Precautions kit included bandages, smelling salts, tourniquets, iodine and numerous other items. Various other kits existed for different organisations. Some of these included items such as anti-gas ointment and devices for identifying poison gasses.

ARP WARDEN DOING THE ROUNDS

▲ Air Raid Precautions wardens were highly trained individuals, capable of dealing with a variety of situations, including how to tackle incendiary bombs, fit respirators and detect gas. Many air raid wardens risked their lives rescuing people from collapsing buildings during the Blitz.

THE BLITZ
OPERATIONS MANUAL
Haynes

Image source: Haynes Publishing

Haynes The Blitz Operations Manual
is available now from Haynes.com and other stockists for £22.99

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

THE PAINTED BIRD

A bleak, harrowing and unforgettable wartime saga not for the faint-hearted

Certificate 18 **Director** Václav Marhoul **Cast** Harvey Keitel, Julian Sands, Udo Kier **Distributor:** Eureka Entertainment

Based on Jerzy Kosinski's controversial 1965 novel, initially touted as a survivor's memoir but which turned out to be a work of fiction (with added accusations of plagiarism thrown in), Václav Marhoul's Czech adaptation is as unflinching and savage as its infamously brutal source material. Taking place in an unspecified Eastern European country during World War II, *The Painted Bird* is a harsh and bruising odyssey populated by figures who are without a shred of compassion or empathy.

The child at the centre of the drama's almost ceaseless maelstrom of misery, who is abused repeatedly and rarely meets kindness, symbolises the loss of innocence in times of conflict. His nightmarish wanderings represent the process of dehumanisation and the virulent anti-Semitism Jews experienced in Europe and which led to its industrialised apotheosis: the Final Solution.

Author Kosinski was hidden during WWII, staying with a Catholic family, and didn't experience anything like what The Boy (Petr Kotlár) endures. However, *The Painted Bird* can be understood as both a philosophical reflection on humankind's ready propensity for barbarism and a form of literary revenge against those who, while not officially signed up to the Third Reich, benefitted from the persecution of the Jews or looked the other way as they were sent off to the gas chambers. The depiction of European peasantry is unforgiving, but to avoid kicking up a stink director Marhoul opted to use a mixture of Slavic languages and dialects, not wishing to specifically identify any particular region or nation. Again, this aesthetic vagueness chimes with Kosinski's own decision to blur locations. The filmmaker intended his movie to be a blanket statement on inhumanity and the madness of war, bearing witness to horror and intolerance.

> "The camera does not flinch from the cavalcade of baseness"

Like *Schindler's List*, the film is presented in black and white, the smoky visuals possessing the hue of ash amid dying embers. The cinematography by Vladimír Smutný also favours carefully framed wide compositions, serving to heighten both the sickly grandeur of this grotesque epic and give the audience a sense of daunting scale: the war machine pumping out more terror and wickedness.

The Painted Bird is challenging viewing and requires full commitment. The camera does not flinch from the cavalcade of baseness, but neither does it revel in empty provocation. The staging and editing of atrocity is artful and you think you see more than you actually do. The overall mood is profound sorrow. Rape, murder, mutilation, genocide and more appear; the film exists in a degenerate environment full of opportunists, deviants and psychopaths. Not since Elem Klimov's 1985 masterpiece *Come And See* has a child's view of warfare felt so powerfully conveyed and essential. ***MC***

★★★★☆

TEN CAESARS

The legacy of Rome retold through ten of its leaders

Author Barry Strauss **Publisher** Simon & Schuster **Price** £20 **Released** Out now

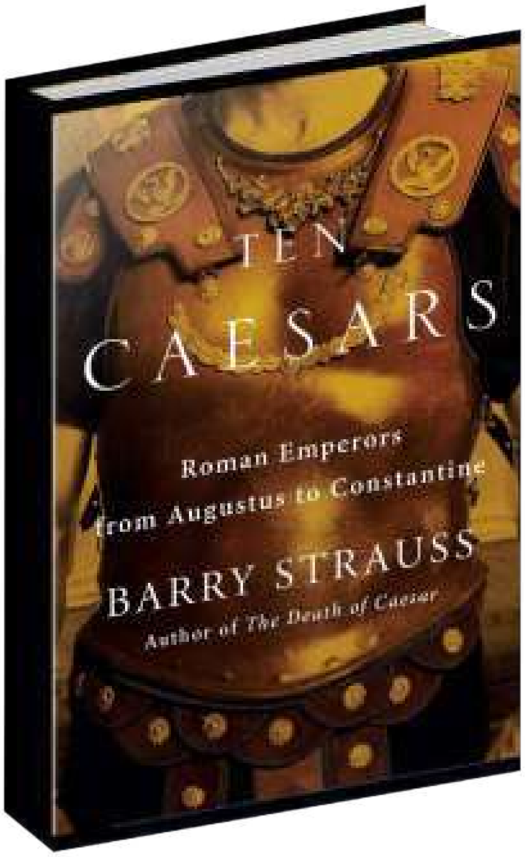
In *Ten Caesars*, Barry Strauss examines the history and legacy of Ancient Rome via the lives of ten of its most renowned leaders. From Augustus, the founder of Rome, to Constantine, Strauss ably guides the reader through more than three centuries of history, aiming as he does to examine not only the Rome they shaped, but also its continuing influence today.

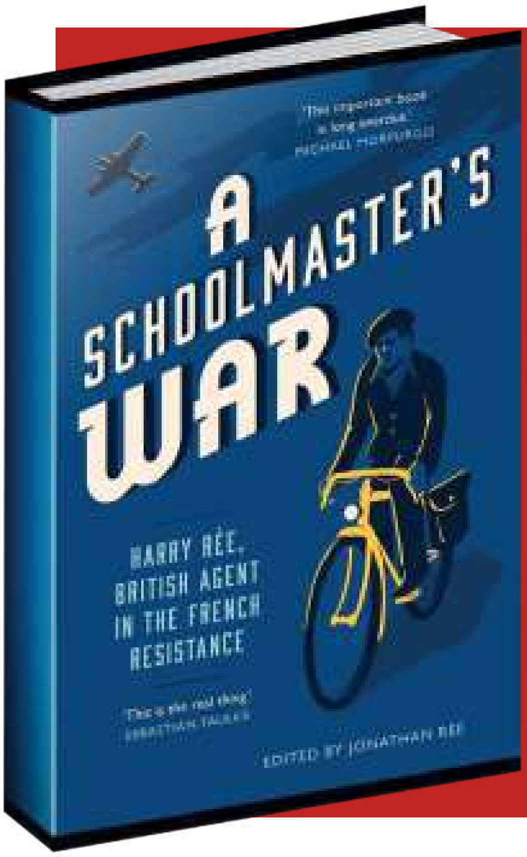
This is not a comprehensive history of Ancient Rome, nor does it claim to be. Instead, it's a condensed history for the casual reader, and it succeeds in guiding us through the tangled stories of the empire with aplomb. Strauss has given himself quite a task and with ten emperors come myriad supporting characters, from wives and children to allies and foes, all of whom are well-drawn and easily distinguishable. In fact, the characters are so vividly represented that it's sometimes difficult to believe that the most outrageous of them aren't simply works of fiction, but such was Rome.

Strauss is a recognised authority on Ancient Rome and he writes with a lightness of touch and accessibility that makes the sometimes complicated subject matter eminently readable. It's clearly well-researched and is supported by meticulous references and an extensive biography categorised by emperor, should one wish to research further.

Ten Caesars is an excellent primer to these ten emperors of Rome. It's succinct, accessible and an ideal introduction to the subject. Those who are already familiar with Ancient Rome might find it all rather familiar, but for the more casual reader there is much to enjoy and learn here. ***CC***

★★★★☆





A SCHOOLMASTER'S WAR

The remarkable true story of a pacifist turned SOE operative

Author Harry Rée, edited by Jonathan Rée **Publisher** Yale
Price £14.99 **Released** Out now

A Schoolmaster's War seems almost stranger than fiction. It's the story of Harry Rée, a schoolteacher who renounced his pacifism when France fell in 1940. Rée went on to join one of the most secret branches of the British army, the Special Operations Executive, or SOE. In this unusual book, which is edited by Rée's son, the philosopher Jonathan Rée, he tells his incredible story in his own words.

Rée parachuted into France in spring 1943, and despite facing incredible danger made contact with resistance groups and advised them on methods of sabotage and secrecy. This is no gung-ho saga though, but an intensely moving study of war.

In the years after the conflict the unassuming Rée returned to his lifelong passion for education. He preferred not to make too much of his heroic exploits, tinged as they were with tragedy and horror, but he wrote extensively of his experiences and it is these writings that form the basis of *A Schoolmaster's War*. The story that emerges makes for remarkable reading. It's far from the self-mythologising memoirs that Rée himself would raise an eyebrow at, but instead paints a picture of a man of great bravery as well as great humility, and the supporting cast is vividly drawn.

A Schoolmaster's War will appeal not only to wartime historians but to any reader who seeks a different sort of memoir, written by a very different sort of hero. ***CC***

★★★★☆

Out now!

Age Of Discovery

Chronicling an era when the edges of the world were not yet filled out and every continent was more or less a mystery to the next, the *Age Of Discovery* special is a fantastic read. Learn about the people responsible for some of the great discoveries of the age, who the powers were behind them and what they left in the wake of their exploration and trading.

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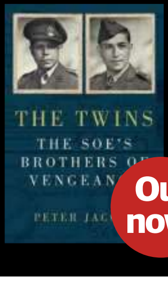
HISTORY OF WAR RECOMMENDS...



Out now!

The Twins

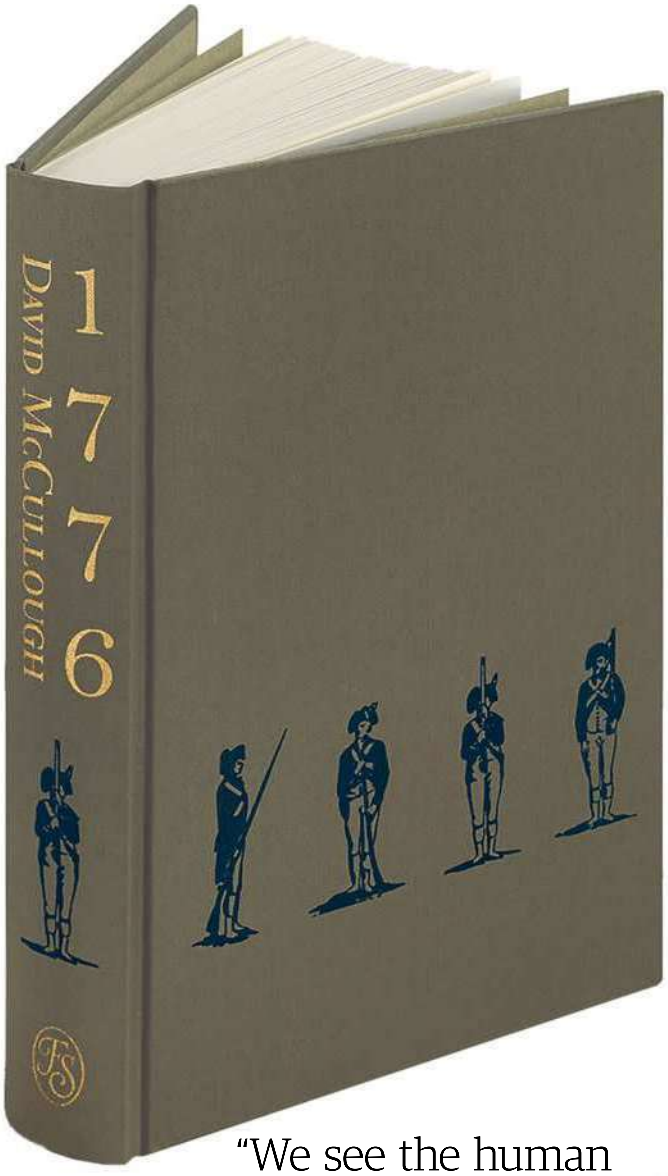
Author Peter Jacobs **Price** £20 **Publisher** The History Press

In December 1941 brothers Henry and Alfred Newton were delivered the devastating news that the mercy ship carrying their entire family – parents, wives, children – had been torpedoed and sunk by a Nazi U-boat with the loss of all on board. From that moment on, they were consumed with a passion for revenge. Peter Jacobs tells their amazing story, from the day they received the tragic news to their courageous wartime exploits and finally their return to London.

1776

An in-depth look at a pivotal year for the American Revolution

Author David McCullough **Publisher** The Folio Society **Price** £44.95 **Released** Out now



"We see the human frailty and fallibility of all those involved"

Many books by esteemed authors and history luminaries pass across our desks on this magazine, but few have come with introductions of their authors as intimidating in their prestige as this one. David McCullough, author of *1776*, has won the Pulitzer Prize twice, the National Book Award twice and a Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honour in the United States, which he received from President George W Bush in 2006. Suffice to say, with *1776* we're in more than capable hands.

As the title intimates, this is a highly focused history of one of the most pivotal years in the War of Independence between the soon-to-be-declared United States of America and the British Empire. Inspired to delve deeper into the year that the Declaration of Independence was signed during his acclaimed biography of John Adams, this book focuses mainly on George Washington, although it gives plenty of time to the lives of those around and against him.

While many of the key names, such as Washington and George III, will be very familiar to even those with a passing understanding of the American Revolutionary period, the portrait that's painted of such men may be quite eye-opening. McCullough gives an even-handed and honest account of everyone's positions, standing back from expressing any particular judgement on their motivations or the veracity of their arguments. History, ultimately, has proven the rights and wrongs of the positions, who the heroes and villains of this story actually were, so instead we see the human frailty and fallibility of all those involved, which is a refreshing experience.

Washington comes across as a deeply moral and upright person, but also quite indecisive and prone to seeing defeat where actually victory is close at hand. It's been famously quoted that when George III was told Washington intended to relinquish his commission and hand the army back to the Congress upon completion of the war he replied, "If he does that, he will be the greatest man in the world." But reading McCullough's account it comes as little surprise that Washington would have behaved in such a way, given just how principled he was.

For George III's part, a historical figure often painted as a villain in adaptations that aim for higher drama, we get a picture of a king who cares very deeply for the continuation of the British Empire and who sees the rebellion across the Atlantic as a threat to the stability of all the colonies. While his ministers bicker about whether the rebels must be crushed now or the chance to crush them has passed, we see some relatively well-reasoned arguments to defend the status quo from those it best benefits.

This is a very focused work and some broader understanding of the events prior and following 1776 would likely bring you greater enjoyment of this wonderfully constructed book. And of course this Folio reprint has all the glorious colour reproduction and quality binding we expect from the publisher. A truly engaging and worthy read. ***JG***

★★★★★

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

THE ELEPHANT MAN

Director: David Lynch **Starring:** John Hurt, Anthony Hopkins **Country:** United Kingdom **Released:** 1980

An emotional take on the life of Joseph Merrick, a 19th century man with severe physical deformities. But does it do his story justice?

C

VERDICT Despite plenty of fanciful touches, *The Elephant Man* gets the emotional side of Merrick's story right.

© Getty Images

01 Dr Treves (Anthony Hopkins) invites John Merrick (John Hurt) for an examination. However, in real life Merrick's first name was Joseph. The real Treves made this mistake in his memoirs, though initially he wrote Joseph and crossed it out. Why remains a mystery.

02 The villainous Bytes, played by Freddie Jones, is an amalgamation of showmen Tom Norman and Sam Roper. The real Treves and Norman each claimed that the other had mistreated Merrick. Either way, Bytes himself is pure fiction.

03 Although the extent of some of Merrick's friendships, and with whom, is exaggerated in the film, Treves did note a change in Merrick after several women visited him. The first was a young widow, Leila Maturin (not in the film) who became a close friend.

04 While living in the Royal London Hospital, Merrick is kidnapped by Bytes and taken to Belgium, where he's kept in a cage. In fact, Merrick went to Belgium willingly prior to his stay at the hospital. He was not caged, but robbed and abandoned by Roper.

05 At the film's climax, Merrick sleeps for the first time on his back rather than sitting up, suggesting it's this decision that'll kill him. His death is blamed on asphyxia caused by the weight of his head, but Treves claimed his autopsy showed it was from a broken neck.

5 x Image source: BFI/Paramount

PASTILA

© Getty Images

Did you know?

There is a museum (and a dedicated museum factory) celebrating the history of pastila production in Kolomna

Ingredients

- 450g sour apples, such as Granny Smith
- 6 tbsp mild raw honey
- 1 egg white

A BELOVED FRUITY TREAT, RUSSIA, 15TH CENTURY – PRESENT

Pastila, a traditional Russian sweet that partially resembles marshmallow, has a rich history dating back centuries. It's typically made with berries or sour Russian Antonovka apples and sweetened with honey or sugar before it's baked in an oven at low temperature for a few hours. Pastila was supposedly loved by Ivan the Terrible, Catherine the Great and Leo Tolstoy and it was a particularly popular treat in Imperial Russia, a time when only the wealthy could afford it. The sweet was originally produced in Kolomna, Belyov and Rzhev but unfortunately pastila production was shut down when the businesses were expropriated after the Russian Revolution. However, pastila has since been revived and is now loved around the world.

METHOD

01 Preheat your oven to 200°C. Grab a sheet tray and line it with parchment paper. Cut the apples in half, place them cut-side down on the tray and then bake them in the oven for 20 minutes, until the apples are soft and starting to collapse.

02 Blend the baked apples into a puree and then pass it through a strainer to ensure that it's nice and smooth. Stir the honey into the puree and then leave the mixture to cool in the fridge for at least one hour.

03 Once the puree has cooled, use a stand mixer or electric whisk to beat it for around eight minutes or until the puree becomes airy and pale. In a separate bowl, whip the egg white until it becomes foamy.

04 Add the egg white to the puree and beat the mixture until it doubles in volume and becomes light and fluffy. Preheat the oven to 100°C, line a sheet tray with parchment paper and grease it lightly. Set aside a small amount of apple mixture to use as a filling later.

05 Using a spatula, carefully spread the pastila mixture evenly on the sheet tray, making sure that it's about 2cm thick. Then place the tray in the oven and bake for three hours. Remove the pastila from the oven and let it cool down.

06 Carefully turn the pastila upside down on a large cutting board and peel off the parchment paper. Cut the pastila into three equal strips. Take the apple mixture you saved earlier and apply a thin layer on top of each pastila strip.

07 Gently place the strips on top of each other and apply a layer of the apple mixture on the top and around the sides. Put the pastila back in the oven for two more hours to dry.

08 Remove the pastila from the oven and allow it to cool down completely. Cut it into slices and the pastila is ready to serve – it can also be stored in an airtight container for several weeks.

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